

Public Schools Branch
Fifty-Sixth Board of Trustees Public Meeting
Tuesday, November 7, 2023

Minutes

The Public Schools Branch Board of Trustees hosted their eleventh public meeting on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 via Webex Virtual Platform.

Present: Heather Mullen, Board Chair
Stephanie Arnold, Vice-Chair
Beverley Ann Boulter, Trustee
Rachel McCarthy, Trustee
Amanda Blakeney, Trustee
Jocelyne Ludgate, Trustee
Wade Czank, Trustee
Jodi Zver, Trustee
Jacob Jadis, Trustee

Regrets: Beckie Keezer, Trustee
Jaclyn Massey, Trustee

Also, in Attendance:

Tracy Beaulieu, Acting Director of the Public Schools Branch
Sheri Gauthier, Confidential Board Secretary
Karen Redmond, Manager, Policy and Planning

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. Chair Mullen welcomed all in attendance and thanked everyone for attending.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

11/07/01

It was moved by Wade Czank and seconded by Beverley Ann Boulter that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

3.1 MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 3, 2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

11/07/02

It was moved by Jacob Jadis and seconded by Amanda Blakeney that the minutes of the October 3, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

4. BOARD CHAIR REPORT

(The complete Board Chair's report will be filed with the official minutes.)

Chair Mullen shared the following report.

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The PSB Naming Committee has been actively meeting and gathering input from both students and the broader Stratford community throughout the past month. I extend my gratitude to Heather MacAulay, who represented the Stratford School area, and Ron Dowling, the Stratford City Councilor, for their invaluable support in this endeavor. A special acknowledgment is due to our student leader, Elliot McNeil-McInnis, whose contributions have been instrumental in fostering engagement among his fellow Birchwood students. Elliot's efforts ranged from showcasing the architects' conceptual artwork in the lobby to facilitating a session for homerooms to participate in the survey

The Naming Committee is consulting with the Government of Prince Edward Island on potential names prior to recommending to the Board of Trustees. Once that has been completed, a report will be provided to the Board outlining the process, relevant information and the Committee's recommendation.

I had the pleasure of participating in the PEI Home and School Federation's Semi-Annual meeting last month, where informative sessions were conducted on various topics, including:

1. What is Home & School?
2. COMPASS Student Health Survey
3. Screens in schools: simple ways to maximize the benefits and minimize the harms?

The attendees exhibited meaningful involvement, and our Board will also receive a presentation on the findings from the COMPASS survey. I extend my appreciation to the organizers for their hard work, and I eagerly anticipate the Federation's Annual Meeting in the Spring.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the local schools across PEI that have actively engaged with their local Trustees. I encourage you to reach out to your local Trustees and invite them to attend your Local Home and School meetings. Feel free to share your school newsletters and any other pertinent information that can help keep them informed about the developments within your school community.

Heather Mullen
Chair, Board of Trustees
Public Schools Branch
Prince Edward Island

Meeting Schedule October/November 2023

October 10, 2023	Meeting with Education Minister
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October 13, 2023	PSB Planning Meeting
October 18, 2023	PSB Naming Committee
October 18, 2023	Queen Charlotte Junior High Home and School
October 23, 2023	PEI Home and School Federation's Semi-Annual Meeting
October 24, 2023	PSB Planning Meeting
October 25, 2023	Colonel Gray High School Home and School
November 1, 2023	Birchwood Junior High Home and School
November 2, 2023	PSB Naming Committee

5. PSB ACTING DIRECTOR REPORT

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

Acting Director, Tracy Beaulieu, shared the following report.

The mission of the Public Schools Branch (PSB) is to foster inclusive, diverse, safe and caring learning environments that inspire a commitment to lifelong learning and community engagement. I am excited to share some wonderful news about our local schools that truly exemplify working toward this mission as well as the values of collaboration, respect, and community engagement.

Mid-October saw the launch of *Report It!* in all 56 schools in the Public Schools Branch. The purpose of this campaign is to remind students of the importance of reporting incidents that have a negative impact on them, their peers, or the school culture. While this is something that has always been encouraged, the Report It! campaign is highlighting the addition of an online method for them to report. While it is still important for students to feel comfortable reporting incidents to a trusted adult, the online option gives them a platform to use if that is a more comfortable method for them. Having a safe and positive learning environment is essential for learning and this is another step in making this happen.

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Eliot River and Spring Park elementary schools recently hosted spectacular Halloween Fun Nights for their school communities, showcasing their commitment to fostering a sense of community and camaraderie. I would like to acknowledge the tremendous time commitment that goes into organizing these events both leading up to and including the evenings they are operating. It demonstrates a testament to the dedication of the staff in creating a positive and inclusive environment for both students and families alike.

For instance, Eliot River's Scream Park saw approximately 2000-2500 visitors. The park relies on a dedicated team of 8-10 core staff, some of whom, including leadership students, devote multiple afternoons and evenings to preparations in the days leading up to the event. Setting up takes a full day, with over 50 staff members staying for one or two evening shifts. Additionally, 150 actors, including current and former students, along with community sponsors, contribute to the event's success. The setup commences before 7am, and the teardown continues until nearly 11pm. Events like this don't happen in our school system without an incredible staff to make it happen.

Additionally, I am thrilled to inform you that Morell High School has emerged victorious in the Envirothon competition. This was a weekend event where students were tested in forestry, aquatics, soil, and wildlife. They were required to do a presentation on how they could increase PEI's renewable energy by 40% with 25 million dollars. This impressive feat is a testament to the hard work and dedication of both students and educators, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability. These young people will be off to New York in the summer of 2024 to represent PEI and we wish them well as they continue to lead their generation in this important work.

Let's not forget our unsung heroes - our dedicated bus drivers. During the month of October there was a collaborative campaign to highlight school bus safety. Our drivers play an invaluable role in ensuring the safety of our students as they commute them to and from school each day. Their diligence and care are a cornerstone of our educational community as they are the first people to greet most of our students each morning and the last face they see at the end of the day.

These accomplishments serve as shining examples of the incredible work being done within our schools, and they wouldn't be possible without the collective effort of staff, students, parents, and the wider community. Together, we are building a nurturing environment where young minds can thrive.

As we celebrate these achievements, let's continue to support and uplift our schools as together, we can create an even brighter future for our community.

Student Services

We want to congratulate Parkside Elementary in Summerside as they are the 2023 recipient of the Tami Martel Verbal Abuse Awareness Award. The plaque was presented to the whole student body in early October. Many thanks to Nick Martin and his staff for supporting many initiatives to foster a positive and respectful school climate.

We are pleased to confirm that the school physiotherapist position that was piloted in 2022-2023 has now been made into a permanent position. This position resides with the Department of Health but is assigned to the PSB Student Services Division. We can now confirm that Annie Macartney will remain in this position moving forward. Congratulations Annie!

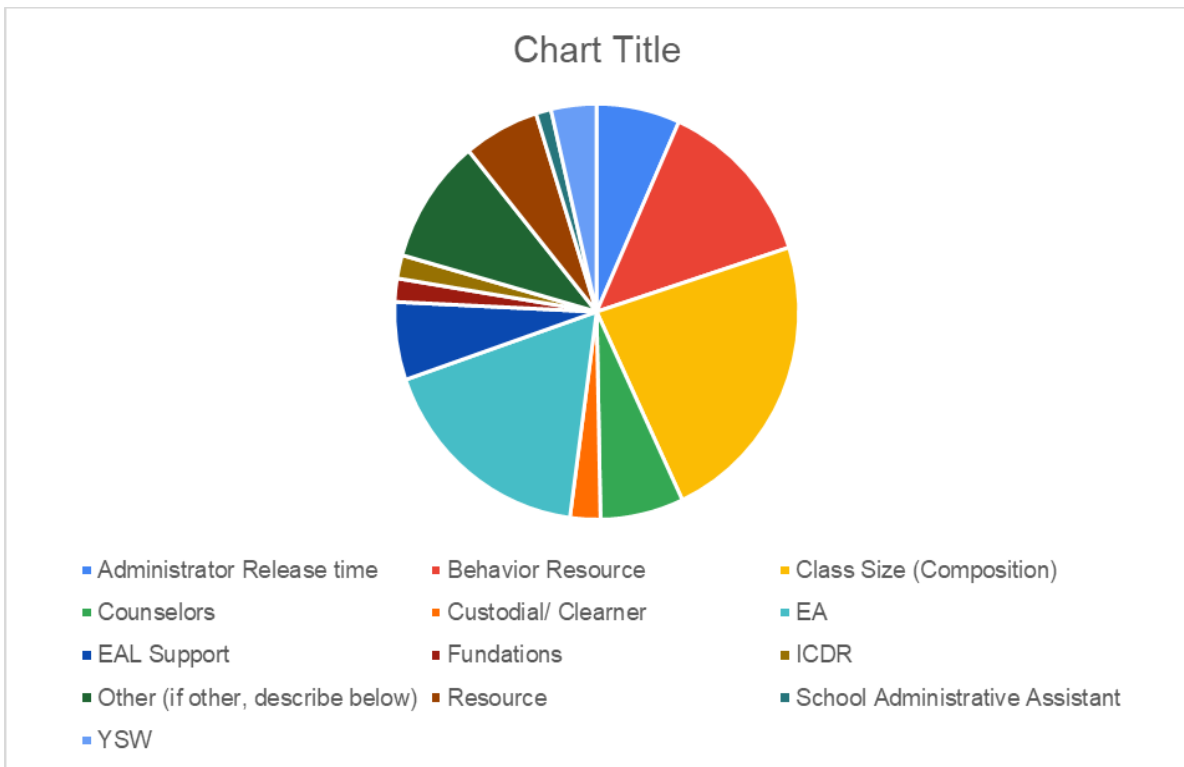
We are also in the process of filling 2 administrative assistant positions. We are pleased to welcome Patti MacLean and should be able to confirm the second position in the coming days.

In a joint project with La Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF) and the Student Wellbeing Team who sent attendees from their respective group, we completed five sessions of PREPaRE on October 26 and 27, with over 80 administrators taking WS1 and over 90 participants (counselors and mental health supports) in WS2. Our plan is to continue and expand this type of training to other groups next fall.

Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) continues to prioritize work in recruitment of substitutes and casuals. Over 300 interviews have been conducted since August, and interviews continue daily. The greatest pressures are with Educational Assistants and Cleaners.

In preparation for Management Planning, HR conducted a survey with school administrators related to their priority needs. 55/56 schools responded and the following summarizes the results.



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Greatest additional needs are FTE for Class Size, Educational Assistants, Behavior Resource, and Counselors.

French

On October 7, the Public Schools Branch attended an Employment and Volunteering Forum that was organized by the Francophone settlement services organization, the Coopérative d'intégration francophone de l'Î.-P.-É. (the CIF). More than 75 French-speaking newcomers and 15 employers, community organizations and service providers participated in the event.

The PSB will participate in a virtual speed-jobbing event on October 27 that is being organized by RDÉE Canada, a national Francophone employment and economic development council. The event connects qualified bilingual immigrants who are eligible to work in Canada and wish to integrate permanently into the local job market.

In January and February 2024, the PSB will participate in three key recruitment fairs in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The fair at Mount Saint Vincent University includes Bachelor of Education students from all five Nova Scotia universities that offer a B.Ed. program. The University of New Brunswick fair includes education students from UNB, St. Thomas University and UPEI. The semi-annual career fair at the Université de Moncton reaches more than 600 students from all faculties, including the Education Faculty.

The PSB continues to strengthen its collaboration with UPEI. Human Resources has already made a presentation French teacher recruitment to the French Second Language B.Ed. cohort. A meeting will take place next week with FSL B.Ed. program coordinator to discuss collaboration on recruitment to both the B.Ed. program and the PSB.

Corporate Services

Throughout the startup of the new school year, the finance and payroll departments have had various meetings and sessions with Principals and Administrative Assistants individually and in group environments to discuss financial and payroll procedures and policies. There has also been a realignment of duties in the finance department to allow for a replacement position to be revised to provide additional support and guidance regarding school finances and raised funds. The interviews for this vacant position have been completed and the successful incumbent will be announced soon.

School Safety Services is preparing to do the next deployment (year 2 of 3) of radon testing equipment in schools. The deployment will be completed in mid-November and the equipment will take readings over the next three months. Schools have received the information around this testing that is to be sent out to school communities.

EAL/FAL

To date, there have been 537 EAL/FAL registrations within the Public Schools Branch since September 1. These new students bring great linguistic and cultural diversity to our schools and are

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welcomed whenever they arrive. It is important to note that continuous intake of new students' places pressure on our system in terms of functional capacity and staffing. Every effort is made to support students in acquiring the additional language and to support all educators as they strive to meet the needs of these new EAL/FAL students.

The STEPP program continues to have a positive impact for those EAL students who are at the very beginning level of language acquisition. As students transition from the STEPP program, classroom teachers are noting the ease of integration as well as the confidence the students have with the English language.

Transportation/Risk Management

School Bus Safety Week

October 16 to 22 was recognized as our second annual provincial school bus safety week. It was an excellent opportunity to place focused attention on safer school bus transportation and the amazing work of our school bus drivers and system support staff every day. Activities related to school bus safety were highlighted at all school levels. The following is a link to a new video created this year in support of this initiative as well. https://youtu.be/YSATdikEV_8?feature=shared

Driver's Professional Development Day

On October 27, all PSB bus drivers, including substitutes, were invited to the New London Community Complex to collaborate and discuss issues specific to driving a school bus for the PSB. Topics included the impact of immigration on our system, RCMP officers presented their role regarding drivers through red lights, and numerous policies were reviewed and discussed. Some passionate and meaningful conversation led to a productive session.

World Under 17 Hockey Championships

On November 6, PSB buses and drivers will be providing transportation services to allow over 5,000 PSB students to attend World Under 17 hockey matches in Charlottetown and Summerside. PSB school buses typically support between 750 and 1,000 co-curricular/ extra-curricular runs each year.

Buses and Infrastructure

As a system, we continue to experience "growing pains" as we transition our school bus fleet to becoming completely electric. Once operational, electric buses are generally well received. Warranty related issues and issues with the installation of charging infrastructure, however, have caused pressures in being able to support co-curricular and extra-curricular student travel, as well as the required regular maintenance of the remaining fleet. We have been assured these issues are temporary.

6. POLICY REPORT

6.1 PROPOSED POLICY – DL5 – FINANCIAL CONDITION & ACTIVITIES

11/07/03

It was moved by Jodi Zver and seconded by Jacob Jadis that the proposed policy DL5 Financial Condition & Activities be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

7. REPORT IT! CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Karen Redmond, Manager of Policy and Planning, provided an update on the Report It! Campaign. Report It! is a reporting tool for students to use to inform their parent/guardian, teacher, school counsellor, principal or a trusted adult when an incident occurs, and if support is needed.

Phase one of the pilot took place in the Three Oaks Family of schools. Fifteen online reports were received within the seven pilot schools. Phase two began in October and is now available in all PSB schools. More information can be found on the PSB website <https://psb.edu.pe.ca/report-it>

8. COMPASS SURVEY RESULTS

Cody Davenport, PEI COMPASS Research Project Lead, joined the meeting to share the results from the 2022-2023 COMPASS study and the plan for the 2023-2024 school year.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.