

Public Schools Branch  
Fifty-Eighth Board of Trustees Public Meeting  
Thursday, April 11, 2024

Minutes

The Public Schools Branch Board of Trustees hosted their thirteenth public meeting on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at Morell Consolidated School in Morell PEI.

Present: Heather Mullen, Board Chair  
Stephanie Arnold, Vice-Chair  
Beverley Ann Boulter, Trustee  
Amanda Blakeney, Trustee  
Wade Czank, Trustee  
Jodi Zver, Trustee  
Beckie Keezer, Trustee  
Jocelyne Ludgate, Trustee

Online: Jacob Jadis, Trustee  
Jaclyn Massey, Trustee

Regrets: Rachel McCarthy, Trustee

Also, in Attendance:  
Tracy Beaulieu, Director of the Public Schools Branch  
Andrea Noye, Confidential Board Secretary  
Karen Redmond, Manager, Policy, and Planning  
Dale Sabeau,

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 p.m. Chair Mullen welcomed all in attendance and thanked Morell Consolidated for hosting the PSB Board of Trustees.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

04/11/01 It was moved by Stephanie Arnold and seconded by Beckie Keezer that the agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**3.1 MINUTES OF THE December 5, 2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

04/11/02 It was moved by Beverley Ann Boulter and seconded by Jocelyn Ludgate that the minutes of the December 5, 2023, Board of Trustees meeting be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

#### **4. BOARD CHAIR/ VICE-CHAIR ELECTION RESULTS**

The February 2024 election results for Board Chair and Vice Chair were shared. Chair Heather Mullen and Vice-Chair Stephanie Arnold will continue with their roles.

#### **5. BOARD CHAIR REPORT**

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

Chair, Heather Mullen shared the following report:

In late January, the Board of Trustees and the PSB Directors convened for a Winter Workshop. During this session, we delved into high-level concerns within each department through small group discussions and relayed community feedback to the various PSB Directors. Additionally, we had the privilege of hosting Minister Natalie Jameson and Deputy Erin McGrath-Gaudet for sessions with the Trustees. The collaboration and relationship-building that transpired during this workshop was excellent and we're enthusiastic about organizing similar events to sustain these crucial dialogues in the future.

Trustees met again in early February to review the management plan for the upcoming year and do some board planning for 2024. We are reviewing our schedule for public meetings, being mindful of providing transparency to the public and management of agenda items and time of the PSB staff. We will be mapping out the rest of the year based on the needs of the PSB for public meetings and continue with ongoing workshops for Trustees and an added focus on engaging our local communities.

Thank you to our Trustees who make up the Hearing and Appeals Committee, Amanda Blakeney, Chair, Stephanie Arnold, Beverly Ann Boulter, and Jacob Jadis. They have prepared a summary of the process to share at the meeting this evening and we will be posting this information to the PSB website to help students, parents and caregivers navigate the appeals process.

Additionally, I want to thank Dale Sabeau for his Review of Schools Report, Charlottetown Area Schools. With extensive experience as a former teacher, principal, school board administrator, superintendent and PSB member, we are fortunate to benefit from his insights and guidance.

I encourage schools, home and school committees and other school volunteer groups to invite your local Trustees to join a home and school meeting, school concert or even join the breakfast program. Trustees will make efforts to attend when possible.

**Meetings with PSB Director/or Staff:** December 11, 19 & 21, 2023  
January 12 & 31, 2024  
February 6, 16 & 29, 2024  
March 1 & 21, 2024  
April 9, 2024

## **6. DIRECTOR REPORT**

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

Director, Tracy Beaulieu shared the following report:

As spring arrives, our schools buzz with activity. Excitement heightens as they gear up for end-of-year milestones and celebrations. Juggling year-end responsibilities alongside staffing plans for the upcoming school year keeps administrators on their toes with hectic schedules.

Part of the planning for the upcoming academic year is engaging schools in the creation of their *School Goals Plan*. In conjunction to this work, we are pleased to announce that April Howe, a consultant from The Crayon Strategy in Nova Scotia, has been hired to spearhead progress in the development of the Public Schools Branch *Strategic Plan*. With her expertise in change management and as a diversity and inclusion consultant, we are confident in her ability to gather crucial information vital for constructing the framework for our strategic plan.

In addition, Dale Sabeau has begun to conduct a comprehensive *Review of Schools* with a spotlight on capacity and population growth trends. Mr. Sabeau's experience as a former Superintendent has given him unique insights in demographic analysis and infrastructure planning, and the information he provides will enable the PSB to assess current capacities, anticipate future demands, and identify opportunities for optimizing our resources and infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of our student body. His work will be organized by concentrating on the family of schools, with the initial focus on the Charlottetown family; this report will be shared at the April 11, 2024, Board of Trustee meeting.

Despite ongoing challenges, our schools remain steadfast in their commitment to creating nurturing and conducive environments for student learning and growth. Through dedicated staff, supportive homes, and community engagement, we continue to inspire and empower students to reach their full potential. As an example of this dedication, we are proud to share that Isaac MacLean, a student from Three Oaks Senior High, and Mark Seemann, a student from Charlottetown Rural, have been awarded the Loran Scholar. The Loran Award is Canada's largest and most comprehensive undergraduate award, granted to young people based on character, commitment to service in their community, and leadership potential. Congratulations to both Isaac and Mark on this prestigious honor and to all those who helped guide them along the way.

As we continue into the final months of this school year, I look forward to the positive impact our staff - and these initiatives - will have on our students.

Warmly,

Tracy Beaulieu

## Student Services

As we are now well past the pandemic, we are refocusing our attention on professional learning opportunities for staff in supporting roles. The following opportunities have been offered: suicide prevention/intervention training for school counsellors, professional development on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) DEEY School Goals, and the use of the mobile mental health unit.

We are also in the early stages of research and planning for an updated Behavioral Threat Assessment Management (BTAM) program and training. As work with PREPaRE implementation continues, the strategic planning group has met and is creating overview presentations for all PSB staffing groups. And finally, we are continuing ongoing work with EAs and YSWs on non-violent crisis intervention (NVC) training.

We already have our eyes on the 2024-2025 school year. Case conferences for new kindergarten students and SNAP meetings are well underway with all 56 schools. The data collected from the SNAP meetings will help us make decisions on how to best allocate our support resources.

## Human Resources

The Public Schools Branch welcomed a new Director of Human Resources at the end of February, Jonathan Mosher. Jonathan holds his Chartered Professional in Human Resources designation, with experience in the public, private and NGO sectors. He was previous Director of Human Resources for Health PEI, prior to that he was Director of Human Resources for Immigrant & Refugee Services Association of PEI and Director of Human Resources for Murphy Healthcare.

The Human Resources team have been engaged with all 56 schools in discussions for staff planning for the 2024-2025 school year. The initial discussion will wrap up on April 5<sup>th</sup>, data will be compiled with the staffing requests awaiting the official budget letter to be released with staffing allotments for the next school year.

School resource planning is anticipated to be completed by early May, at which time Human Resources will go through the staff assignment process with school administration teams.

Conciliation was successful with the CUPE 1145, 1770 & 1775 bargaining units, the proposed contract is being finalized in order to be put out to respective employees for a ratification vote.

PSB is currently engaged in pre-bargaining sessions with PEITF, next pre-bargaining session is scheduled for April 24, 2024, with bargaining scheduled to commence on May 6, 2024.

CUPE 3260 collective agreement expired on March 31, 2024, the Education Negotiating Agency (ENA) team has been formed, currently awaiting confirmation of dates to commence bargaining.

## Finance Services

The Public Schools Branch welcomed a new Financial Services Manager in March, Ashley Higginbotham. Her previous roles include Senior Financial Officer with the Town of Three Rivers and Grant Thornton in the Montague Office. Ashley is a Chartered Professional Accountant and has experience with accounting, payroll, budgeting, forecasting and year-end duties. Ashley has been busy getting up to speed and has been doing an excellent job in her first few weeks with the Public Schools Branch.

Finance has reached the fiscal year end of March 31. For the next two months, staff will complete the expense entry, final year-end payroll, account analysis, and prepare the working files for audit. Our external auditors will then begin their work on the file in mid-May, with their work completed by the end of June. Once the audit is complete, the Finance and Audit Committee will review the financial statements. Based on reporting requirements, once the Financial Statements are approved, they are then forwarded to the Province of PEI.

## Property Services

Property Services are currently planning summer priority projects that were requested by each school, while continuing with their day-to-day maintenance across the system. Property Services is also actively working with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DTI) on developing priorities and scopes of work for the 2024/2025 minor capital projects. Many of these projects are currently being designed and/or tendered and are expected to start this summer.

Property Services and DTI are actively working on two major capital projects, Sherwood Elementary and Stratford High. As well as finishing the Elliot River Elementary renovation and addition, and the Montague Consolidated renovation. Construction on both these projects are progressing well. The design for Stratford High is near completion. A planning committee has recently been appointed for the Queen Charlotte addition, with the first meeting to be held in the near future.

School Safety Services is in the process of collecting the radon tests from the second round of schools. Once the test results are received, the information will be provided to the public. Out of the four schools from the original round of testing that showed signs of elevated levels of Radon, two were mitigated in August 2023 and monitored again this winter. The other two schools required different forms of mitigation and will be installed this summer. These schools were also monitored this winter to ensure the levels did not increase.

## EAL/FAL

To date, the PSB Schools have registered 820 new EAL/FAL learners from more than 50 countries during the 2023-24 school year. EAL/FAL learners bring rich cultural and linguistic diversity to our school system. New language learners are presenting with English and French proficiency skills ranging from just being able to say their name to being able to read and write. Our itinerant model of language support helps to facilitate language acquisition and we are seeing significant progress.

Beginning April 8<sup>th</sup>, we will reassess all EAL/FAL students who are receiving itinerant support to determine their level of progress and to determine if they will continue to need support in the 2024-25 school year. Reassessment is a time of celebration. For even the smallest gains in language acquisition are a triumph for our EAL/FAL students and their families.

## Transportation/Risk Management

### *Driver Training*

Recruitment, Interviewing/Hiring, and Training continues to be a necessary focus. We are pleased to share that we have been advised that federal funding is expected to continue in support of training for new school bus drivers, for another fiscal year. PSB Transportation hires approximately fifty new school bus drivers each school year. We expect similar numbers for the foreseeable future.

### *Additional Bus Drivers*

We are very pleased to share that the PSB has been advised that there will be a couple of additional school bus drivers allotted to next year's FTE compliment. While it is estimated that approximately 15-25 new drivers and buses would be required to address all current concerns re overcrowding and travel-times, the addition of any drivers offers welcome support to some of our most challenging areas.

### *Bus Monitors*

Research, including jurisdictional scans, is underway with the intent of further supporting drivers in dealing with issues on their buses. In conjunction with the FLSB and DEEY, work is underway to implement a pilot program to potentially begin as early as this month.

### *Buses*

Through aging and attrition, approximately thirty school buses are scheduled to be removed from the PSB fleet at the end of this school year. A similar number of new buses are scheduled to be procured by the province, to be received this fall. The PSB continues to face many range-related challenges associated with electric buses and has advocated for consideration that a number of fossil fueled buses be included in immediate tenders, until charging infrastructure and technology can equate or exceed the demands of our system.

**7. NAMING COMMITTEE**

**7.1 Approval of School Name and Colours**

04/11/03

It was moved by Jodi Zver and seconded by Stephanie Arnold that the new Stratford school be named Stratford High School with school colours of blue and grey be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**8. REVIEW of PSB CAPACITY/ INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW DUE TO POPULATION GROWTH AND HOUSING (Phase 1- Greater Charlottetown Area)**

Guest, Dale Sabeau shared the PSB Capacity/ Infrastructure Review Due to Population Growth and Housing report and gave a brief overview of the report.

The full report can be found here:

**UPDATE WEB ADDRESS ONCE POSTED**

04/11/04

**8.1 Approval of Status Quo Be Maintained.**

It was moved by Jodi Zver and seconded by Wade Czank that the status quo be maintained but the situation be monitored at the following schools be approved and presented. Motion carried.

- i. Donagh Regional School
- ii. Glen Stewart Elementary School
- iii. Parkdale Elementary School
- iv. Prince Street Elementary School
- v. Sherwood Elementary School
- vi. Spring Park Elementary School
- vii. Stratford Elementary School
- viii. West Kent Elementary School
- ix. Birchwood Intermediate School
- x. Queen Charlotte Intermediate School
- xi. Stone Park Intermediate School

04/11/05

**8.2 Approval that Options for Change Be Explored.**

It was moved by Jodi Zver and seconded by Beverley Ann Boulter that options for change be explored for the following schools be approved as presented. Motion carried.

- xii. L. M. Montgomery Elementary School
- xiii. St Jean Elementary School
- xiv. West Royalty Elementary School
- xv. Charlottetown Rural High School
- xvi. Colonel Gray Senior High School

**9. APPEALS COMMITTEE PROCESS**

Trustee, Amanda Blakeney shared the appeals committee process.

The full report and supporting documentation can be found here:

**UPDATE WEB ADDRESS ONCE POSTED**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.