

Public Schools Branch
Board of Trustees Public Meeting
Tuesday December 17, 2024

Minutes

The Public Schools Branch Board of Trustees hosted their fourteenth public meeting virtually on Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Present: Heather Mullen, Board Chair
Stephanie Arnold, Vice-Chair
Beverley Ann Boulter, Trustee
Amanda Blakeney, Trustee
Wade Czank, Trustee
Beckie Keezer, Trustee
Jacob Jadis, Trustee
Jaclyn Massey, Trustee
Rachel McCarthy, Trustee
Dominique Lecours, Assistant Director of Public Schools Branch

Regrets: Tracy Bealieu, Director of Public Schools Branch
Jocelyne Ludgate, Trustee

Also, in Attendance:
Natasha Monaghan, Executive Administrator to the Director
Heather Palmer, Executive Administrator to Assistant Director
Blake Crockett, Director of Finance
Dale Sabeau, Consultant
Matt MacLeod, Senior Communications Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:49 p.m. Chair Mullen welcomed all in attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

12/17/01

It was moved by Rachel McCarthy and seconded by Wade Czank that the agenda be approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

3.1 MINUTES OF THE October 29, 2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

12/17/02

It was moved by Jacob Jadis and seconded by Beckie Keezer that the minutes of the October 29, 2024, Board of Trustees meeting be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

3. BOARD CHAIR REPORT

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

Chair, Heather Mullen shared the following report:

I would like to thank the dedicated teams at PSB and the Department of Education and Early Years for their efforts in addressing the challenges we face with our aging school infrastructure and the growing population across PEI. In the Capital Budget announced on November 7th, the PEI Government outlined significant investments over the next five years, including \$64.9 million for two new elementary schools in Charlottetown, \$10 million to replace Georgetown Elementary School, and \$70.4 million to build a new junior high school in Stratford. Additionally, \$16.8 million is allocated for renovations at West Isle High School, and \$1.8 million in 2025/26 for acquiring five mobile classrooms.

There is also a commitment of \$43.5 million over five years to purchase 131 buses and install fast-charging infrastructure, alongside \$300,000 allocated over the next two years for outdoor learning spaces. Furthermore, the ongoing School Revitalization Fund, with \$16 million over the next three years, continues to support improvements. This budget also includes funds to complete projects such as Sherwood Elementary School and the Queen Charlotte Expansion. This is a tremendous investment in the future of Islanders, and we deeply appreciate the recognition of the need to fund educational spaces across PEI.

In the next few months, Trustees will review PSB policies and procedures and the latest school report reflecting on the population growth in schools outside of the Charlottetown area. I encourage local schools to invite your Trustee to events and meetings concerning your school community and you can look on our website for opportunities to submit your comments by email as well.

I was honored to have been invited to the Rotary Youth Parliament and their concluding luncheon last month. Witnessing high schoolers from all over PEI take on the roles of MLAs and discuss bills with such fervor and insight truly inspires hope for what's to come. My heartfelt congratulations to all the participating students! A big thank you goes out to the organizing committee and the rotary clubs throughout PEI for their ongoing support of this fantastic yearly event. And let's not forget the invaluable contribution of the many teachers who guide their students through this remarkable journey.

With the holiday season nearing, I wish our staff a well-deserved break to unwind and rejuvenate.

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

Meeting Scheduled – November & December 2024

December 17, 2024_Public Mtg Minutes

November 12 - PSB Planning Meeting
November 16 - Rotary Youth Parliament
November 19 - Meeting by phone with Assistant Director
November 20 - PSB Update Meeting

November 20 - Meeting by phone with Deputy Minister

November 21 - Meeting by phone with Assistant Director
November 22 - Meeting by phone with Director of PSB
November 26 - PSB Board Committee of the Whole

November 28 - Meeting by phone with Assistant Director
December 2 - PSB Budget Planning

4. DIRECTOR REPORT

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

Director, Tracy Beaulieu shared the following report:

Director of Public Schools Branch Update Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

We are excited to announce that a PBIS coordinator has been hired to lead the implementation of PBIS strategies across our pilot schools. Meghan Etchell brings a wealth of experience in behavior management and educational leadership and will be instrumental in ensuring that PBIS principles are effectively integrated into our school communities. She has connected with our PBIS contacts in New Brunswick, with professors at UPEI who will assist in the research and data collection, and with the PBIS school leads and administration. These initial meetings are focused on introducing PBIS practices, gathering feedback from school staff, and providing training and resources to ensure that the program is implemented with consistency and fidelity.

Management Plan Submission

We are pleased to report that the management plan for PSB has been submitted for the upcoming fiscal year. This comprehensive plan highlights the financial requirements that are necessary to operate the system, and it also identifies areas where additional supports are being requested. I want to acknowledge the time and effort that was invested in this plan by each of the directors and thank them for their efforts to consider mitigations where possible throughout the process.

Season's Greetings

I would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season filled with good health, peace, and the joy of spending time with loved ones.

EAL/FAL Update

The EAL/FAL Division continues to provide programs and services to newcomer students in both the PSB and CSLF on PEI. EAL and FAL itinerant teachers view additional language learning as an experiential and interactional process, wherein knowledge is co-constructed and high expectations of all learners are upheld.

Data and Trends

Over 3,600 EAL/FAL learners from 111 countries bring cultural and linguistic diversity into PEI schools and classrooms. There are 1,099 EAL/FAL students on caseload, receiving itinerant teacher support. Approximately one-third of these students are at lower levels of language proficiency.

The figure below includes 482 new EAL/FAL students registered in schools since July of 2024.

District/Board	Numbers of Students	Percentages
PSB	3483	96.00%
CSLF	145	4.00%
Total	3628	100.0%

School Transition EAL Program (STEP)

Numbers of newly arrived EAL students with lower levels of English language proficiency continues to increase. A soft landing into PEI schools via the *STEP* is provided and well-received at Queen Charlotte, Spring Park, Sherwood, West Royalty, and Athena Consolidated. The STEP will finish at Prince Street on December 20th. On January 6th, Stratford Elementary and Glen Stewart Primary will have staffing for a combined STEP.

Finance Update

During the recent Canada Post work stoppage, the accounting department has been working to ensure payments and receivables are kept up to date. Staff are working with vendors to have invoices/statements sent and received via email and transferring vendors on manual cheque payments to EFT. Our department has also been busy working on estimates for the 2025-26 Management Plan and preparing for the important 3rd quarter forecast (as of December 31st) to the provincial government. Staff in the payroll department continue to work to find and implement efficiencies for our Branch payroll program. Not only are staff very busy working within the two-week payroll cycles, but the department has also successfully made some small changes to duties within positions. These changes will improve some processes; however, the department continues to operate a large, growing, and extremely complicated payroll program.

Human Resources Update

Applicant Tracking System

On December 9, 2024, Public Schools Branch launched its new Applicant Tracking System (ATS). This system is designed to enhance efficiency, improve communication, and streamline the hiring process for everyone involved.

Key Features:

- **Improved Communication:** A more transparent and efficient process for communicating with applicants.
- **Digital Transformation:** Replaces outdated, manual processes with a faster, more efficient system.
- **Easy Access:** Quick and streamlined access to important applicant and employee information.

HR Staffing Announcement

The PSB Human Resources Team is excited to announce that Crystal Gillis has joined the PSB Human Resources team in our Human Resources and Labour Relations Administrative Assistant role – crystalgillis@edu.pe.ca

Crystal will not only be a primary support for the HR team, but will also be able to help you connect with the appropriate HR contact should you not know who to reach out to with your inquiry. Welcome to the PSB Crystal!

Property Update Maintenance

School Safety & Minor Capital Repairs:

Property Services and School Safety are actively working with the schools, ensuring issues and concerns are addressed in a timely manner across the system. There is great work happening each day at the schools to provide a safe learning and working environment.

Property Services is also working with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DTI) on next year's minor capital repair priorities, which takes into consideration building infrastructure and school revitalization upgrades. These priorities will be designed and tendered starting early in the new year and continued throughout the winter in preparation for 2025/2026 summer construction.

Major Capital Projects:

Property Services and DTI are continuing to work on two major capital projects, Sherwood Elementary and Stratford High. Construction on these projects is progressing well, with Sherwood expecting to be complete this winter. DTI is working through the process to tender Design services for the Queen Charlotte addition project. Once the tender is awarded, the planning committee will meet with the successful consultant to continue the design process.

Other exciting news came with the announcement of the capital budget for the Public Schools Branch and the significant investment that is being made in education infrastructure. These projects include: two new elementary schools in Charlottetown (with a new school in East Royalty starting this fiscal year and the planning and design for the second school in West Royalty starting 2028/29), Georgetown Elementary will be replaced with a new facility to be completed by 2029/30, Stratford Intermediate School will start with design in 2026/27, and Westisle High School will receive phase 1 of their

renovation starting in 2026/27. Other investments include five mobile classrooms, new buses, and outdoor learning spaces.

Student Services Update New Violent Incident Form

On December 6th, administrators were provided with a “Violent Incident Report Form.” This form is to be used when there is a violent incident or verbal abuse involving a student. The goals for this new form:

- Easier to complete but provides the information that is needed to track violent incidents and verbal abuse.
- Better reflects the language we are using and the information we are trying to capture.
- Better collection and processing of data.

This new form will allow a transition to electronic submission in the future.

Student Services Divisional Meeting

On December 19 at the Divisional Meeting, Student Services staff will have a presentation on the new *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*. Lindsay Long, Provincial Intake Assessment Unit Supervisor, and Terri MacEwen, Child Protection Investigation Supervisor will present on the new act and respond to questions from the teams.

PREPaRE and Behavioural Threat Assessment Management

PREPaRE training for new school counsellors and psychologists is being planned for February 2025. This is Workshop 2 of PREPaRE - Crisis Intervention and Response.

Approval and funding has been provided for updating the PSB threat assessment process. Planning for Behavioral Threat Assessment Management (BTAM) training is underway. This training will take place early in the 2025-2026 school year.

Student Services Staffing Announcements

Student Services welcomes Sarah Smith as the confidential administrative assistant to the Director and Managers in Student Services. Sarah is replacing Buffy Fraser who is on maternity leave.

As well, Kerri Linzell-Waddell has been hired as a fixed term administrative assistant for Student Services until June 30. In this role, Kerri will provide coordination for incoming kindergarten case conferences, support the role of autism consultants in the preparation of materials, and assume additional administrative duties as necessary.

Transportation Update

Lion Electric Corporation

On Dec. 2, Lion Electric Corporation, the PSB's sole provider of PSB electric buses, announced significant layoffs corresponding to ongoing financial losses and declining corporate valuation (see 5year stock price chart below). The layoffs included all personnel stationed in PEI supporting our electric buses.

The future of the organization is uncertain at this point, and therefore so too is our ability to manage ongoing warranty issues (i.e. mass issues with heaters and compressors) as well as future electric propulsion specific repairs. This may lead to increases in our number of buses out of service for repair on any given day, leading to probable increases in late buses, cancelled or rescheduled extra-curricular trips, etc.

Weather Calls, Power Outages and Impact on Infrastructure

As a system, we experienced our first bouts of winter weather and power outages this past number of weeks. PSB Transportation met with officials from the Department of Highways to review and solidify our continued working relationship when gathering the best information available in support of weather-related scheduling decisions. Power outages present additional challenges with the electrified portion of our school bus fleet. We continue to learn and grow with this transition.

Active Transportation

Discussions were held with provincial representatives regarding PEI's active transportation initiative and how it may complement our school system. Ideas were shared regarding enhancing infrastructure throughout communities as well as on school properties that encourage greater portions of our population to engage in active transportation (i.e. walking, biking, roller-blading, skateboarding, etc.). Benefits include enhanced physical fitness, positive impacts on our environment, economic savings, and others. Secondary benefits could include decreased school bus ridership, which may help with over-crowding and time on bus issues, curricular tie-ins to Phys Ed programming, improvements to school parking area traffic congestion from parental drop-offs and pick-ups, enhanced community involvement, and others.

5. BOARD BUSINESS

5.1 School Review Report

12/17/03

It was moved by Jacob Jadis and seconded by Beckie Keezer that the status quo be maintained at Central Queen Elementary School. Motion carried.

12/17/04

It was moved by Amanda Blakeney and seconded by Jacob Jadis that the status quo be maintained at Bluefield Senior High, East Wiltshire Intermediate, Eliot River Elementary, Englewood and Gulf Shore Consolidated Schools, but that student enrolments and the need for modifications at these schools be monitored. Motion carried.

- 12/17/05 **It was moved by Wade Czank and seconded by Jaclyn Massey that a more in-depth study of Westwood Primary School be done, and that options for change be explored. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/06 **It was moved by Rachel McCarthy and seconded by Beckie Keezer that the status quo be maintained at Kensington Intermediate Senior High School. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/07 **It was moved by Rachel McCarthy and seconded by Beverley Boulter that the status quo be maintained at Queen Elizabeth School, but that student enrolments and the need for modifications at this school be monitored. Motion carried.**
- RESCINED AND REPLACED AT THE APRIL 22, 2025, MEETING**
- 12/17/08 **It was moved by Rachel McCarthy and seconded by Amanda Blakeney that the status quo be maintained at Amherst Cove, Kinkora Regional High and Somerset Consolidated Schools, but that student enrolments and the need for modifications at these schools be monitored. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/09 **It was moved by Jacob Jadis and seconded by Wade Czank that the status quo be maintained at Belfast Consolidated, Cardigan Consolidated, Southern Kings Consolidated and Vernon River Consolidated Schools. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/10 **It was moved by Beverley Boulter and seconded by Jaclyn Massey that the status quo be maintained at Georgetown Elementary, Montague Consolidated and Montague Regional Schools, but that student enrolments and the need for modifications at these schools be monitored. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/11 **It was moved by Jacob Jadis and seconded by Rachel McCarthy that a more in-depth study of Montague Intermediate School be done, and that options for change be explored. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/12 **It was moved by Amanda Blakeney and seconded by Beckie Keezer that the status quo be maintained at Morell Consolidated, Morell Regional and Mount Stewart Consolidated Schools, but that student enrolments and the need for modifications at these schools be monitored. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/13 **It was moved by Wade Czank and seconded by Beverley Boulter that the status quo be maintained at Souris Regional School. Motion carried.**
- 12/17/14 **It was moved by Beckie Keezer and seconded by Amanda Blakeney that the status quo be maintained at Three Oaks Senior High School, but that student enrolments and the need for modifications at this school be monitored. Motion carried.**

12/17/15 It was moved by Beckie Keezer and seconded by Wade Czank that a more in-depth study of Athena Consolidated, Elm Street Elementary, Greenfield Elementary, Miscouche Consolidated, Parkside Elementary and Summerside Intermediate Schools be done, and that options for change be explored. Motion carried.

12/17/16 It was moved by Beverley Boulter and seconded by Beckie Keezer that the status quo be maintained at Alberton Elementary, Eilerslie Elementary, M.E.Callaghan Intermediate, O'Leary Elementary, St. Louis Elementary, Tignish Elementary and Westisle Composite High Schools. Motion carried.

12/17/17 It was moved by Jacob Jadis and seconded by Rachel McCarthy that the status quo be maintained at Bloomfield Elementary and Hernewood Intermediate Schools, but that student enrolments and the need for modifications at these schools be monitored. Motion carried.

5.2 Strategic Plan

12/17/18 It was moved by Jacob Jadis and seconded by Amanda Blakeney that the Strategic Plan be approved with friendly amendment.

7.0 Financial Invoices

12/17/19 It was moved by Beverley Boulter and seconded by Jacob Jadis that invoice 358428- Bus Repairs & Bus Fuel be approved as presented.

12/17/20 It was moved by Beckie Keezer and seconded by Rachel McCarthy that invoice 355289- Liability Premium be approved as presented.

12/17/21 It was moved by Beckie Keezer and seconded by Wade Czank that invoice 355266- Property Premium be approved as presented.

12/17/22 It was moved by Rachel McCarthy and seconded by Amanda Blakeney that invoice 355257-Automobile Premium be approved as presented.

8.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. C. C.", is written over a horizontal line.

Chair Signature of Approval