

Public Schools Branch
Fourth Public Board of Directors Meeting
November 15, 2016

Minutes

The Board of Directors for the Public Schools Branch met on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at Tignish Elementary School.

Present: Susan Willis, Board Chair
Harvey MacEwen
Pat Mella

Also in Attendance:

John Cummings, Director of Corporate Services
Karen Redmond, Manager of Policy and Planning
Becky Chaisson, Financial Services Coordinator
Cindy MacLean, Confidential Board Secretary

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. The Board Chair welcomed those in attendance and expressed appreciation to Principal Ellsworth for providing the Board with a tour of the school.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

11/16/01 **It was moved by Pat Mella and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the agenda be approved. Motion carried.** The Board Chair moved Public Input on the agenda to follow the presentation by Principal Ellsworth.

TIGNISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRESENTATION

Principal Mike Ellsworth welcomed the Board and provided an overview of student activities, programs, staff and community involvement at Tignish Elementary School.

Members of the Tignish Elementary Ukulele Club performed a number of pieces under the direction of Robyn Verhoeven, music teacher.

The Board Chair expressed appreciation for the presentations, and thanked Principal Ellsworth for hosting the meeting at Souris Regional School

PUBLIC INPUT

Jaclyn Gallant made a presentation on behalf of West Prince Home and Schools regarding the school review process. (A copy of the presentation will be filed with the official minutes.)

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 18, 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

11/16/02

It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Pat Mella that the minutes of the October 18, 2016 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As Director Grimmer was unable to attend the meeting, the Director's Report was presented by John Cummings, Director of Corporate Services.

1. Report on the Review of Schools

The Public Schools Branch has just completed the second round of public consultations meetings as outlined by the School Change Policy. The most recent round was designed to provide the public with opportunities to identify viable options to improve learning and school environments for students from schools families identified as needing further, Category II study. Feedback and input from all stakeholders is important and has been welcomed through public meetings, over 30 private meetings with Bob Andrews, and online submissions to the Better Learning for All website that will close on November 30.

The Public Schools Branch has encouraged everyone to participate in public meetings and we committed to respectfully receive and listen to varying perspectives. These evening meetings took place for:

- Charlottetown Rural family at the Charlottetown Rural High School cafeteria on Tuesday, November 1.
- Morell family at the Morell Regional High School gymnasium on Wednesday, November 2.
- Colonel Gray family at the Colonel Gray High School cafeteria on Thursday, November 3.
- Kinkora family at the Kinkora Regional High School gymnasium on Monday, November 7.
- Westisle family at the Westisle Composite High School lecture theatre on Tuesday, November 8.
- Montague family at the Montague Regional High School cafeteria on Thursday, November 10.

The format of these meetings included opportunities for Islanders to make presentations and to respond. The first two hours of each meeting was designated for individuals or groups to make presentations. There were over 60 presentations at the 6 Family of Schools public meetings. Presenters were asked to keep their presentations to up to ten minutes in length to allow for as many presentations as possible. During the third hour, people had an opportunity to provide comment on the ideas presented.

Aided by information received through this process, School Reorganization Project Manager, Bob Andrews, will now develop a report with recommendations for change for these 6 families of schools that he will present to the Board of Directors for their consideration in January of 2017.

There were questions and comments from members of the public regarding to the school review process, and the Board Chair invited those whose questions were not able to be answered at the meeting to submit their questions in writing for response after the meeting.

2. Second Quarter Forecast

The Public Schools Branch continues to monitor its finances closely. The Branch recently compiled a forecast in October based on having completed six months of the current fiscal year. The Branch is facing cost pressures in some areas.

Currently, we are projecting a slight deficit for the current year but given that the heating season has a major impact on the Public School Board's finances it is still a little premature to know exactly how things will end. The Public Schools Branch will continue to monitor its finances closely in an effort to achieve a balanced budget. The Director of Corporate Services and the Financial Services Coordinator provided a brief overview of the budget forecast.

3. Invoices over \$100,000

The Director of Corporate Services presented three invoices related to insurances provided by the Risk Management and Insurance Section of the Department of Finance and Energy.

11/16/03 **It was moved by Pat Mella and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the Board of Directors approve payment of Invoice #287928, in the amount of \$347,110, payable to the Minister of Finance, for general liability and directors'/officers' professional liability insurance for the Public Schools Branch. Motion carried.**

11/16/04 **It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Pat Mella that the Board of Directors approve payment of Invoice #287934, in the amount of \$177,278, payable to the Minister of Finance, for automobile liability insurance for the Public Schools Branch school bus fleet. Motion carried.**

11/16/05 **It was moved by Pat Mella and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the Board of Directors approve payment of Invoice #287938, in the amount of \$526,350, payable to the Minister of Finance, for property insurance, crime, boiler and machinery insurance for Public Schools Branch facilities. Motion carried.**

4. School Visits

The Director of the Public Schools Branch has visited 24 schools to date. He has spent parts of a day in each of these schools and was very impressed with the student learning he has witnessed. During his visits, he also talks with students and staff; works with, reads to, or teaches students; tweets out information about what is going on that day; and passes out cards of thanks (over 70 to date) and a Public Schools Branch pencil or pen to students who have been recognized by staff for doing random acts of kindness.

5. Highlighting the Good Things Happening in Two Schools The Director Has Visited

Tignish Elementary – This school has collected data on student progress for quite a number of years and have a data wall that assists staff in helping students progress and succeed. The staff decided that one of the most important pieces of data to collect on overall student progress were reading levels. They had the Provincial Sign Shop, located in their community, design this wall with all reading levels. The grade levels and their corresponding benchmark reading levels for each grade is represented by a specific color. This color corresponds to the color of the paper each teacher uses to record his/her class reading levels. Levels are placed on the chart vertically. For example, the benchmark reading levels for grade three are all green; so too is the color of all the names from grade three. Overall, using the data wall, it is easy to quickly spot a name from grade three that isn't at benchmark.

Staff collect levels from their students three times per year. This allows their case-management team to discuss students not at level, students who have not progressed, as well as the potential for reading groupings between grades. Staff keep student folders that have their PM benchmark reading levels on one side, and on the other side a yearly record of Ideas, Organization and Ideas. Also included is a yearly sample of writing with Descriptive Feedback on the Next Steps discussed with each student. While these benchmarks are clearly important, they are only part of the process of helping students learn.

Kinkora Regional - Flexible Learning Periods - Last year Kinkora started having Flexible Learning Periods twice a week. While the staff believed all students can learn, what was clearer than ever to them was that students don't all learn the same way or in the same amount of time. They found that is equally true that there is no way a single teacher has all the time, all the knowledge, and all the skills to meet the needs of every student. While Kinkora have attempted to keep class sizes small, increased their skills, and offer plenty of extra help opportunities for students, they believe that offering extra time for student support through the school day offers students even more support to continue to increase their achievement. Staff are excited about the opportunity to rewrite the equation for student learning moving from a traditional formula of Targeted Instruction + Time = Learning Constant + Constant = Variable, to what they believe is a highly effective formula of Targeted Instruction + Time = Learning Variable + Variable = Constant. Students are assigned to a Flex class during the block and attendance is taken, similar to any other classes. They hope in time, to be able to offer enrichment opportunities for those who may not require additional time in their traditional classes.

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED PUBLIC SCHOOLS BRANCH LOGO

Mr. Cummings expressed appreciation to all who participated in the Public Schools Branch Logo Contest. A total of 13,253 votes were cast in the final round of voting. Congratulations were extended to Mark Ferrish from Kensington Intermediate Senior High School whose logo was selected to be the new Public Schools Branch logo.

- 11/16/06 **It was moved by Pat Mella and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the Board of Directors approve the Public Schools Branch logo selected through the Public Schools Branch Logo Contest as the official symbol for the Public Schools Branch. Motion carried.**

PROPOSED EASTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT/WESTERN SCHOOL BOARD RESCISSIONS

The Manager of Policy and Planning noted the Eastern School District and Western School Board policies recommended for rescission are no longer required as the subject matter is now addressed within the new *Education Act*, and/or other policies and official documentation.

- 11/16/07 Eastern School District Policy KB - Partnerships
It was moved by Pat Mella and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the Board of Directors rescind Eastern School District Policy KB – Partnerships, as presented. Motion carried.
- 11/16/08 Western School Board Policy 16 – Contact with Blood and/or Body Fluids
It was moved by Pat Mella and seconded by Harvey MacEwen that the Board of Directors rescind Western School Board Policy 16 – Contact with Blood and/or Body Fluids, as presented. Motion carried.
- 11/16/09 Western School Board Policy 32 – Communications with Staff
It was moved by Harvey MacEwen and seconded by Pat Mella that the Board of Directors rescind Western School Board Policy 32 – Communications with Staff, as presented. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Board Chair noted that the next meetings of the Board of Directors are scheduled for Dec. 20, 2016 with the Annual School Board Meeting for the former English Language School Board at 7:00 p.m., and the Public Schools Branch Meeting at 7:30 p.m., both at Somerset Elementary School.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.