

Public Schools Branch
Thirty-Fifth Public Board of Directors Meeting
July 21, 2021

Minutes

The Board of Directors for the Public Schools Branch met on Wednesday, July 21, 2021 via Webex virtual platform.

Present: Bethany MacLeod, Board Chair
Mary Jane Ready
Norman Beck

Also in Attendance:

Norbert Carpenter, Director of Public Schools Branch
Becky Chaisson, Director of Corporate Services
Sheri Gauthier, Confidential Board Secretary
Karen Redmond, Manager, Policy and Planning
Terri MacAdam, Director of Student Services
Kelly Drummond, Director of Human Resources

1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 p.m. Board Chair MacLeod welcomed all in attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

07/21/01 **It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the agenda be approved. Motion carried.**

3. MINUTES OF THE MAY 17, 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

07/21/02 **It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the minutes of the May 17, 2021 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. DIRECTORS' REPORT

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

Director, Norbert Carpenter, shared the following report.

Director's Office

The Public Schools Branch (PSB) successfully wrapped up the 2020-21 academic school year on June 30th. We were very fortunate to have our students attend school on a regular basis throughout the COVID-19 situation. This was only made possible because of the hard work, dedication and adaptability of our employees. We are looking forward to the return of

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more normal times. We will continue to work and collaborate with the Chief Public Health Office about plans for the upcoming school year and share details with the public and staff in the coming weeks.

The Directors of each department will be completing some work over the summer to prioritize our goals for the upcoming school year. Moreover, some additional work will be completed in the area of roles and responsibilities. Recently, Jeff Clow, Principal at Three Oaks Senior High school acquired the position of Administrator Support Leader (ASL). This brings the complement of ASL's back to three. The position of Assistant Director is not being backfilled with the departure of Erin Johnston. We thank Erin for her dedication and commitment to the PSB over the past number of years.

Student Services

The PSB Student Services department continues to work diligently to support students, staff and families as we plan for the upcoming school year.

Transition planning and support are a top priority for consultants; this includes facilitating and attending ongoing case conferences, as well as liaising with outside agencies, daycares, and families to plan appropriately for the fall.

Inclusive Education, Autism and Counselling consultant efforts continue via facilitating special transportation arrangements, identifying, ordering and maintaining specialized equipment inventories in conjunction with OT, SLP, HEAR and APSEA staff, and coordinating and updating Individualized Education Plans and Behaviour Support Plans for students.

PSB psychologists are completing Psych-Ed assessments and supporting schools via feedback meetings, consults and referral consultation.

Professional development investments that build capacity and sustainability in the areas of Behaviour support and management, as well as intensive academic intervention have been completed and are being implemented.

Transfers and subsequent appeals are being worked through, as well as the number of students/families requiring additional individualized support moving into the province and/or changing zones.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is at the forefront of ongoing initiatives, in collaboration with schools and other key stakeholders to ensure our schools are a positive place where all students can learn and thrive.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Team has been working on a number of initiatives to support and build the PSB workforce. The HR team is in the process of hiring a temporary HR Manager to focus on Organization Growth and Employee Experience. Areas of concentration continue to be:

- Recruitment for bus drivers, educational assistants, French teaching and EA positions, and counselling positions
- Employee Wellness
- Diversity
- HR Planning

French Recruitment

Three projects in the area of French recruitment have been happening concurrently.

1. With the support of funding from DELL, Linda Lowther was hired to gather information and provide recommendations on; data, reporting/research, and promotions related to French hiring.

It was determined that Peoplesoft would house information on current FI teachers as well as new hires with French language competency levels. Naming conventions have been established (as it relates to people) and Peoplesoft Central is performing a direct data import. To improve the data, we have hired a UPEI student to update naming conventions on positions. Once both of these data sets are updated, we will be able to run regular reports to monitor French staff and French positions. This will be a regular HR metric that we can report on which will help measure the success of our HR Planning as it pertains to French positions.

Some promotional material was created; a brochure and video for both the PSB and CSLF and linked to websites with regards to recruitment information.

2. David Night (consulting) conducted a survey to collect personal information from our French employees such as; location from which they were recruited from, educational background, and institution from which they graduated from.
3. Diane Aresnault was contracted to help with short term recruitment needs. Her work includes a comprehensive list of "Pipelines" from which we can recruit teachers and EAs. This includes all programs and educational institutions in Atlantic Canada, Quebec, and Canada as a whole. Some of this was derived from an analysis of the survey data collected by David Night. This project also included an inventory of recruitment fairs and events, and a list of job posting channels.

Holland College - EA Certification

HR and Student Services have met with Holland College to discuss customized and flexible training for current substitute authorized EAs. This program would be an 11 course certificate supported by Skills PEI.

Bus Driver Training

113 drivers have been trained in the past year between JVI and PSB training programs.

Staffing May-June

10 Cleaner/custodians since first of June - approximately 50 interviews

2 Admin Assistants since first of June

PEITF Competitions: 359 postings - New Screening process to better support Administration

Letters & Contracts in process of begin written and sent to employees (earliest in 6 years getting these started)

106 EA and YSW Postings (since June 7st) with 18+ ready to go for July 26th (as per collective agreement), interviews were conducted en masse, resulting in over 50 interviews. Approximately 50 of the 106 positions have been filled and 27 of those are new probationary hires

Corporate Services

Finance - The year-end audit has been completed and all information that is required, has been submitted to the Comptroller's office. Thank you to the PSB staff and to Grant Thornton for their hard work and dedication in order to meet the tight timelines that are necessary when completing this large audit. The 2021-2022 PSB budget is being prepared and will be presented for approval at the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors. In addition to this work and the regular day-to-day operations, there have been a number of tenders that have been completed and are being worked on and this is a significant piece of work for the department.

Payroll - Payroll has been busy in addition to the normal pay run cycles that are being completed. Records of Employment have been completed for all 10 month employees and all schools need to have employees moved and set up for the start of next school year, so this work is happening as well. There is a lot of movement and additional hours during the summer months for some of the employee groups, and payroll plays an important role in ensuring that all employees are paid correctly, with all the changes that are occurring. We did have one vacancy to fill in this department and we are pleased that Jeanine MacKenzie has joined our payroll team.

Occupational Health and Safety - Occupational Health and Safety has been extremely busy working on the program review and renewal, in addition to dealing with all the normal tasks that they do on a regular basis. There have been a number of training opportunities that have been arranged by this department for the staff to ensure that everyone has the necessary training that is required. This department is working on a roll out strategy to properly educate all employees on various elements of the overall health and safety program, as well as working on very specific programs and procedures for specific items.

Property Services - Property Services staff have been extremely busy in trying to complete as many projects as possible over the summer months. There are many schools that have work going on and all staff are working hard to get all of our buildings ready for

the return of staff and students. Custodial staff is hard at work in the individual buildings ensuring that all the necessary summer cleaning is completed as well. Property Services Managers have been working with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to manage the major renovations that are underway at Eliot River Elementary, Montague Consolidated and West Royalty Elementary, while they are also heavily involved in the planning committees for Sherwood Elementary and Stratford High School. Property Services is dedicated to getting as many projects completed as possible over the summer months and into the fall while working through many resource and supply challenges that have presented themselves since the start of the pandemic.

Transportation

Summer months are always busy for PSB Transportation Services, but two brand new additional areas of focus have made things especially so this year:

Driver Recruitment, Interviewing/Hiring, and Training - To address ongoing issues of driver shortages, on Saturday June 12, Transportation Services held its first ever province-wide school bus driver job fair. At a location in each of PEI's three counties, transportation supervisors were on site with school buses promoting available positions as school bus drivers. These efforts generated interest from about 100 people. Transportation Services has been busy since conducting interviews and orchestrating or delivering the necessary driver training to selected candidates. Each new candidate requires a three week intensive driver training course followed by two additional weeks of student management training and OJT. COVID restrictions remain in place limiting our cohort sizes to four candidates. As a result, this brand new, but labour-intensive initiative will remain ongoing throughout the summer and well into the school year.

Electrification of Buses - In November, 2020 the province committed to replacing all of its public school buses with electric. See <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-electric-school-bus-1.5794939>

We are currently in the second purchase phase of this ongoing initiative, with 35 more electric buses scheduled to be on site prior to school starting in September. While our first 12 electric buses received positive initial reviews, the transition to electric does not come without many additional challenges. Infrastructure conversion (how we get them charged) will be perhaps our most significant challenge. To this point, economies of scale have led to the installation of chargers at centralized charging locations (bus depots). With over 80% of our fleet parking their buses at home each night, however, moving to a central charging model will have a significant impact on our drivers, as well as on the green spaces and property required to house the charging units. For example, in addition to the elevated power requirements, charging areas must be large enough not only to park the buses, but also to allow for parking areas for driver's vehicles who must now take their own cars to these locations to pick up their buses multiple times each day, etc.

Routing Updates - Efficiency, student time aboard buses, and fiscal responsibility are the three key factors that shape efforts around routing. The summer months are always busy preparing for September, removing graduating students, adding new kindergarten students into the busing system, accounting for other new students (immigration or otherwise), and

students that move each year. Challenges in altering, adding, or eliminating bus runs have direct impacts on students, drivers, and the system as a whole, and efforts during the summer months in routing are among the most important decisions we make all year long.

5. CHARLOTTETOWN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS UPDATE

Director, Norbert Carpenter, provided an update on three Charlottetown Intermediate schools; Queen Charlotte Intermediate, Stonepark Intermediate and Birchwood Intermediate. Work is being completed focusing on capacity and enrolment to determine future needs. Norbert will continue his review and report back to the Board at a future meeting. It was noted that this review would not be completed prior to September 2021.

6. 2022-2023 CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION PRIORITIES

Director, Norbert Carpenter, reviewed the 2022-2023 Capital Construction Priorities letter. Director Carpenter is seeking approval for the details outlined in the letter.

07/21/03 **It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the Board of Directors accepts the 2022-2023 Capital Construction Priorities letter as presented and requests that the Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning recommend to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure that funding for the identified capital construction projects in the amount indicated in the letter be secured for the next fiscal year. Motion carried.**

7. POLICY REPORT

7.1 PROPOSED POLICY – EMPLOYEE DRUG, ALCOHOL AND MEDICATION

07/21/04 **It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the proposed policy be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

7.2 PROPOSED POLICY – STUDENT INVESTIGATIONS AND SEARCHES

07/21/05 **It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the proposed policy be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

8. OTHER BUSINESS

No business to report at this time.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:41 p.m.