

**Public Schools Branch**  
Thirty-Eighth Public Board of Directors Meeting  
November 15, 2021

Minutes

The Board of Directors for the Public Schools Branch met on Monday, November 15, 2021 virtually via Webex.

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  
Dave Gillis, Director of Transportation, Risk Management and RIM  
Karen Redmond, Manager of Policy and Planning  
Terri MacAdam, Director of Student Services  
Paula Annear, Manager, Human Resources  
Sheri Gauthier, Confidential Board Secretary  
Sparrow McGowan, Senior Communications Officer  
Blake Crockett, Coordinator, Financial Services

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Board Chair MacLeod welcomed all in attendance.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Financial invoice #330886 for September Fleet from Bridgetown Garage was added to the agenda.

11/15/01 **It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the agenda be approved as amended. Motion carried.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**3.1 MINUTES OF THE MAY 17, 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

11/15/02 **It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the minutes of the May 17, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented. Motion carried.**

**3.2 MINUTES OF THE JULY 21, 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

11/15/03 **It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the minutes of the July 21, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented. Motion carried.**

### **3.3 MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

11/15/04 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the minutes of the September 13, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

### **3.4 MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 4, 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

11/15/05 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that the minutes of the October 4, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented. Motion carried.

### **3.5 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 school year is in full swing and the days and weeks are passing by quickly. November brings the PEITF annual convention and meetings for CUPE work groups. Furthermore, report cards and parent teacher interviews are scheduled for this month. The school year has been an exceptionally busy one for many reasons. Therefore, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all our staff for the tremendous work and dedication during very challenging times. We have had to navigate many challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, through great partnership with the Chief Public Health Office and Health PEI we have persevered. Nonetheless, many other societal challenges have surfaced at our schools and we continue to work through many of these with our employees and partners.

#### **COVID-19**

The 2021-22 school year has seen two separate COVID-19 situations at our schools. The West Royalty Elementary outbreak was large in scope, but was handled very well by all directly affected. More recently, individual cases at Westwood Primary and Eliot River Elementary were quickly contained and saw little interruption to regular routines for students, staff and parents. We continue to meet and discuss the pandemic and its impact on our staff and students. Currently, we remain in an elevated risk situation and are discussing possibilities for our 5-11 year old students once Health Canada approves the vaccination for this age group.

#### **Communications**

The 2020-21 Annual report has been completed and will be tabled in the legislature by the Hon. Natalie Jameson in the coming weeks. The Public Schools Branch (PSB) continues to

utilize our social media accounts in an effort to provide clear and timely information to our stakeholders. Moreover, work is currently being done to revamp the PSB's website.

### **Policy and Planning**

There have been a number of policy developments over the past few months. The PSB has developed a Social Media and Digital Messaging Guideline. The guideline outlines expectations around the use of social media in a school setting. They are intended to be educational and aim to promote a shared responsibility among staff, students and parents to use social media and digital messaging thoughtfully, respectfully and responsibly.

The Non-medical Mask procedure was updated to reflect guidance from CPHO. Currently, all staff and students in grades K-12 are wearing a mask in common areas and during transitions. In addition, all staff and students in grades 4-12 are wearing a mask when they are not able to physically distance themselves.

In response to the *CPHO Vaccination Information and Testing Policy Order for Front-line Public Service Providers*, the PSB implemented the COVID-19 Vaccine Information and Testing Policy. Vaccination rates among staff are very high at 93.5%. Staff who are not fully vaccinated are tested at their worksite three times per week. Individuals visiting a school, 12 years of age and older, are required to provide proof of vaccination, if they will be in the school for more than 15 min. Parents who need to meet with school staff but who are not fully vaccinated, are connecting with staff by phone or a virtual meeting.

Safe and Caring Learning Environments policy - This comprehensive policy is currently being reviewed to ensure students have adequate options when it comes to incident reporting.

### **IT/Data Update**

Powerschool is up and running in all of our 56 schools and Students Achieve and Trevlac have been decommissioned. The Powerschool team includes membership from the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning (DELL) and the PSB. This group has worked tirelessly to get this new and more robust student information system up and running over the last year. Some of the main milestones with this new program include; having accurate and accessible demographic and contact information, mass communication capabilities, marks management and parent information. Currently, not all features are fully operative, but pilots are underway at various schools and we anticipate the full functioning system will be available soon.

The current student enrollment sits at 19930 across our 56 schools which is an increase of over 400 students from this time last year.

### **Student Services**

#### **PD and Training Highlights**

- All school counselors are now completing DBT (dialectical behavior therapy) training.

- Behavior Resource teachers have been trained in AIM curriculum for behavior and in self-regulation strategies
- Resource and French Immersion resource teachers are focusing on supporting students with autism, IEP development
- Strategies and resources
- Resource teachers and autism consultants have received Peers curriculum training (Social skills programming)

### **Recruitment**

- Interviews are happening weekly for substitute YSW and EA positions (HR and Student Services collaboratively)
- Still trying to recruit a school psychologist
- Postings will go up soon for Manager, Autism Consultant (permanent due to a retirement) and 1 inclusive education and 1 autism consultant for second semester due to leaves.

### **Online Support**

- Student Services have developed several learning packages online. Included are:
- A short course of modules for uncertified EA's wanting to substitute. All must be done before an EA/TSW begins employment
- Resource Interventions- a series of modules that demonstrate how each intervention is to be used as well as any materials (reproducible) that may be needed.
- OT have done a series of videos for teachers and support staff on topics such as seating, hand strength, wearing a mask etc.
- All of the above were made by our staff with teachers from the system assisting.

### **Human Resources**

Our current focus falls on four key pillars;

- Talent (recruitment, staffing, on boarding, training and development)
- Wellness
- Labour Relations
- HR Metrics/Planning/Policy

### **Talent**

PSB Human Resources has been focusing on French recruitment and retention. Diane Arsenault has been hired part-time until the end of March to build a French HR strategy that will set the stage for short term, mid-term, and long term initiatives. Early successes included;

1. Review and analysis of national and provincial reports and initiatives on the French teacher labour shortage and challenges faced by the cohort of French teachers;
2. Establishment of an organizational baseline of the PSB's French teacher cohort (underway)

3. Identification of education career fairs and recruitment activities for PSB participation in 2022
4. Preparations for presentations to grade 11-12 French immersion students on future employment opportunities for bilingual individuals on PEI (focus on PSB opportunities), post-secondary options in French and supports to continue studies in French
5. Establishment of linkages with the Canadian Association for Immersion Professionals (CAIP) and identification of opportunities for collaboration on the national initiatives currently being led by the CAIP

Human Resources has also conducted a LEAN Six Sigma review on the staffing process. We have redesigned the staffing business process for substitutes and casual staff to be more streamlined and efficient. We are measuring results related to the change and will re-evaluate early January. Applicants for substitute and casual jobs are being contacted within 24 hours of receiving their applications and interviews are set-up within a 1 week period. This allows a more fluid process and ensures casual/sub lists are being refreshed regularly.

### **Wellness**

PSB HR is working on enhanced processes related to return to work and accommodation processes and strategies including modified work programs.

A major initiative that is being worked on is a campaign on Cyberbullying and Psychologically Safe Workplaces. PSB is leading the project but this will be a collaboration between WCB OHS (Jonathan Andrews), Human Rights (Tom Hilton), Teachers Federation (Selina Pellerin) and CUPE (Karla MacDonald). The campaign is being designed to educate school age children, parents, staff and the overall school community. It will include short 30 second clips/videos and posters that talk about the impacts and consequences of cyberbully, including the psychological impacts it has on students and staff.

### **Labour Relations**

PEITF Bargaining finished in June of 2021. The parties did not come to an agreement so this will move to conciliation/arbitration.

Collective Agreement Bargaining is underway with CUPE 3260 (Education Support). We anticipate this will continue into January 2022.

### **HR Metrics/Planning/Policy**

The implementation of the Vaccination/ Mandatory Testing has been a huge undertaking. Immunization records have been verified and regular testing protocols are in place. Testing results are submitted to CHPO on a regular basis. We are happy to report that 93.5% of PSB employees are fully vaccinated. Numbers continue to improve.

### **Training and Development**

The Administrative Support Leaders (ASL's) have scheduled professional development meetings with principals and vice principals. Topics that are being covered include the PSB

Social Media Policy, staffing protocols and evaluations, diversity (micro aggressions) and discussion related emotional intelligence and resiliency.

The HR team has completed training in unconscious bias. Administrative Support Leaders (ASL) and the Director of HR are working on a certificate program related to Workplace Restoration. In November, HR, ASLs, Director of Student Services and a few Principals will take investigation training. Those certified will then provide Investigation training for all administrators to ensure a solid consistent approach to workplace incidents.

## **Corporate Services**

### **Finance**

Finance has been working on forecasts for this fiscal year as well as providing pressures for the upcoming fiscal. This has been extremely challenging the past couple of years with the extreme variances that COVID has caused in fiscal spending. In addition to this, there have been a large number of public tenders that have had to be completed for various equipment and service needs.

School Cash Net which is the software that schools use for expense management has been experiencing a significant number of technical issues. The version that the PSB is operating is outdated and Finance staff has been working with the service provider to gather information around updating our software and is hoping to move forward with an update in the near future once all the proper work has been completed.

### **Payroll**

Payroll staff have been processing pay throughout the start of the school year. As always, this continues to be a busy two week cycle waiting for information from schools and staff. There has also been an upshift in employee requests for retirement calculations and estimates. This takes time for staff to navigate employees to the proper channels and provide pension service providers (Morneau Shappell) with applicable payroll data. On top of this, with the upcoming merger of ESPP with the PSPP, payroll is working and planning for what will be needed/required going forward. There will also be some new data implications that staff need to ensure is up to date and accurate for CUPE (prior ESPP staff) as they transition to PSPP.

### **Property**

Property Services has been busy dealing with many maintenance issues and equipment issues at the schools. In addition to the regular maintenance needs, the staff has been busy ensuring that the schools have the necessary COVID supplies and rapid tests. The Property Services department continues to do capital planning for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. We continue to meet with the DTI to plan for the upcoming needs and demands of our buildings.

In addition to our regular maintenance, work continues on the major capital projects that are underway and being planned. The projects that are underway are the West Royalty Elementary addition, the Eliot River Elementary addition, the Montague Consolidated

renovations, the planning for the Sherwood Elementary and the planning for the Stratford High School.

### **School Safety Services**

School Safety Services has welcomed a new addition to the team, Shiloh Schmidt who has filled the School Safety Consultant vacant position. This team has been working through the role of our new program and continues working with staff to educate and train everyone on their roles and responsibilities as well as the importance of an active safety culture in our system.

## **Transportation**

### **School Bus Collision**

On October 29, at approximately 3:15 PM, PSB Bus #49 was involved in a collision with an SUV at the intersection of Kingston Road and Bannockburn Road in Queens County. Twenty-six elementary aged students from Eliot River Elementary and Westwood Primary schools and one driver were aboard the bus at the time. The collision caused the bus to spin and roll on to its left side. Three children reported injuries, one of which was airlifted to receive medical attention off island. This student has since returned home and all involved are reportedly progressing well. In the end, this incident re-established a high degree of confidence in our people, our equipment, and our processes.

### **Time on Buses and Overcrowding**

Managing the two conflicting concerns of overcrowding and travel time on buses is a focus of the daily work conducted by Transportation Services. Evaluating runs in an attempt to improve efficiency is ongoing, however, with a fixed number of buses, drivers, and support personnel our ability to reach the goals of “a comfortable ride” and “ride times of one hour or less” is limited.

## **5. DIRECTOR’S DIVISIONAL UPDATES**

Divisional updates were provided by Terri MacAdam, Director of Student Services, Becky Chassion, Director of Corporate Services, Dave Gillis, Director of Transportation and Risk Management and Paula Annear, Manager of Human Resources.

## **6. FINANCIAL SERVICES INVOICES**

### **6.1 INVOICE #328445 JUNE FLEET EXPENSES**

**It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that invoice #328445 dated July 30, 2021 in the amount of \$199,447.20 be approved as presented. Motion carried.**

### **6.2 INVOICE #329536 AUGUST FLEET EXPENSES**

11/15/07 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that invoice #329536 dated September 16, 2021 in the amount of \$104,628.60 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**6.3 INVOICE #330253 LIABILITY PREMIUM FOR 2021-2022**

11/15/08 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that invoice #330253 dated October 15, 2021 in the amount of \$638,782.00 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**6.4 INVOICE #330268 AUTOMOBILE PREMIUM FOR 2021-2022**

11/15/09 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that invoice #330268 dated October 15, 2021 in the amount of \$321,532.00 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**6.5 INVOICE #330285 PROPERTY PREMIUM FOR 2021-2022**

11/15/10 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that invoice #330285 dated October 18, 2021 in the amount of \$965,608.00 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**6.6 INVOICE #330444 SEPTEMBER FLEET EXPENSES**

11/15/11 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that invoice #330444 dated October 21, 2021 in the amount of \$147,808.17 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**6.7 INVOICE #330886 SEPTEMBER FLEET EXPENSES FROM BRIDGETOWN GARAGE**

11/15/12 It was moved by Mary Jane Ready and seconded by Norman Beck that invoice #330886 dated November 8, 2021 in the amount of \$104,096.51 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**7. 2021-2022 PSB OPERATIONAL BUDGET APPROVAL**

11/15/13 It was moved by Norman Beck and seconded by Mary Jane Ready that the 2021-2022 PSB Operational Budget be approved as presented. Motion carried.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

No new business to report at this time.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.