



**HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
PROGRAM AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2014

- Members present:** J. Cobb; B. Danes; T. Goodfellow; M. Hall; D. Inch; L. Kyle, Vice-chair;
D. Patterson; J. Williams, Chair
- Student Trustees:** M. Peckham
- Regrets:** None
- Guests:** None
- Resource:** C. DeMille, K. Donnell, T. FitzGibbon, K. MacQuarrie, L. Miller, C. Portt,
J. Rogers, M. Savery-Whiteway
- Minutes:** C. Reid, Administrative Assistant

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Delegations/presentations - None

Approval of agenda

Moved: J. Cobb
Seconded: B. Danes

That the agenda be approved.

Carried

Approval of minutes

Moved: D. Patterson
Seconded: T. Goodfellow

That the minutes of the November 11, 2013 regular meeting be approved.

Carried

Business arising from the minutes

Trustee Goodfellow noted that she was not able to attend the OPSBA Work Committee meeting as scheduled.

Recommendations - None

Information

Instructional Technology Advisory Committee Update

Senior Information and Technology Services Officer, Kelvin MacQuarrie noted that the report, as printed, should read "Instructional" Technology rather than "Information" and Technology. He stated that the Instructional Technology Advisory Committee has met twice during the 2013-2014 school year. It was reported that one priority was carried forward from last year. Cloud computing and the Google Apps for Education pilot continues and has expanded to over 20 teachers in the elementary panel. Another priority identified for this year is to standardize business and academic platforms to ensure consistency for all our users. The district needs to move away from WordPerfect Office and have all systems with Microsoft Office. The most cost effective way to provide Microsoft Office to all our users is to enroll in a Microsoft Volume Licensing Program or Enrollment for Education Solutions (EES).

Professional development for all staff in the integration of technology remains a priority for ITAC and there will be further discussions at upcoming meetings regarding how to support employee growth in this area.

Trustees sought clarification regarding what platform is currently being used by the Ministry. It was confirmed that the Ministry has licensing agreements with both Microsoft Office and Corel WordPerfect

Office but most of the documentation coming out of the Ministry is in Microsoft or PDF format. Trustees stressed the importance of professional learning for employees, stating that it is a critical and essential component and needs to be actively addressed. It was also confirmed that students are being educated on the rules and regulations regarding privacy and the proper use of technology in schools.

Revised Policies

Director Savery-Whiteway stated that 18 policies are being reviewed this year, nine at the beginning of the year and nine later in the year. A recommendation will be brought forward to the January 27, 2014 Board meeting to approve changes to the nine policies that were reviewed at meetings of the Executive Committee held on November 4 and November 12, 2013. Director Savery-Whiteway highlighted changes to the policies that included consistent wording, clarification of terms and alignment with current practices.

Regional AiM Focus Groups

Director Savery-Whiteway reviewed Report No. C-3, commenting that one of the actions in the AiM System Plan is to engage students, employees, families and community members in the review and development of the system plan. To achieve this goal, focus groups will be conducted in the spring of 2014 for input on the next system plan, and to find ways in which the Board can better communicate and engage with employees, families and the community.

Appendix A, containing the communication plan for the focus groups, was reviewed. It was noted that the Board has engaged a third party researcher to assist with facilitating these sessions to ensure integrity of the data. Five regional sessions will be held to ensure that all areas of the board are represented and will include students, employees, families and community members. The sessions will be between an hour and an hour and a half long, possibly over lunch, and participants will be asked only five or six questions. The external researcher will collect the data and provide a report. Invitations will be sent to school council chairs, parents/guardians, community partners, employees from each employee group and students in Grades 6 to 12.

Concerns were raised regarding the time of day for the sessions. It was confirmed that the dates and times have not yet been determined and can be flexible in order to be as inclusive as possible. Information was provided regarding the name and background of the external researcher. In response to a question about trustee involvement, it was clarified that trustees and senior administration are not expected to be participants in these sessions. The intent of the focus groups are to provide an open forum, guided by the research facilitator, to gather responses from the focus group members to a series of questions regarding the AiM System Plan. The director will bring greetings to the focus groups and will explain the process and the rationale for trustees and senior staff not being present to the focus group discussion.

Curriculum Review Update

Superintendent Portt reviewed Report No. C-4, noting that the Ministry of Education is responsible for the development of curriculum and policy documents. In 2003, the Ministry established an ongoing cycle of curriculum review, whereby a number of subject disciplines enter the review process each year ensuring that curriculum remains current and relevant and is age appropriate from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in all subjects. The review process supports the identification of areas for revision, analysis and synthesis by teams of experts in subject disciplines. Draft revisions of the curriculum documents are then shared for feedback from Board personnel before revisions are finalized. Once released, board teams receive training in the revised curriculum and then board teams determine training and professional learning opportunities for teachers.

Copies of recently revised curricula in 2013 were shared, including:

- Social Sciences and Humanities, Grades 9 to 12
- Canadian and World Studies, Grades 9 and 10 Social Studies, History and Geography, Grades 1 to 8
- French As a Second Language, Extended French, Grades 4-8; French Immersion, Grades 1-8

Copies of recently revised policy and resource documents for 2013 were shared, including:

- Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools K – 12 (Policy and Program document)

- School Effectiveness Framework: A Support for School Improvement and Student Success K-12 (Resource document)

Superintendent Portt reviewed a list of curricula currently in the review cycle and stated that the Ministry of Education is completing the curriculum review cycle that began in 2003. As they are nearing the end of the process, the Ministry is gathering information from schools and boards in order to inform future plans.

It was confirmed that district teaching staff are involved in curriculum review and some employees are involved at the onset of the revisions. Trustees recognized the ongoing focus and initiatives to build instructional capacity, especially in Math. Trustees raised questions specific to student success and wondered when a review of the Math curriculum would be addressed. Superintendent Portt stated that although the Math curriculum is not contained within the current timeline for review, the Board's BIPSA is the anchor document where professional learning resources and supports are aligned to initiatives to move student achievement forward especially in area of numeracy. In addition all schools have a SIPSA containing detailed professional learning plans to move forward in literacy and numeracy.

Trustees sought clarification regarding the expectations contained within the new curriculum documents. It was confirmed that these new curriculum documents don't represent new courses but rather are updates to curriculum already being taught that teachers are familiar with. These new documents have updated expectations and training is provided to teachers where there are significant differences between the current and revised documents. Additional resources are sometimes required to support the revised curriculum but the structures remain essentially the same. Comments were made regarding recent announcements related to resources and funding to support teachers in teaching Mathematics. It was confirmed that the \$4 million infusion that was recently announced by the Ministry is in support of numeracy initiatives that are currently underway.

Response from EQAO

Director Savery-Whiteway distributed and reviewed the letter received from Bruce Rodrigues, Chief Executive Officer of EQAO. She explained the timeline and the actions taken in order to receive this response to the Board's letter dated November 20, 2012. Following some discussion it was determined that a letter be drafted and delivered to the OPSBA Directors and Work Committee to determine provincial support and next steps. The letter will be drafted by the director and shared with trustees prior to being provided to Trustee Goodfellow for delivery.

Regulation 274 Update

Superintendent FitzGibbon provided background information regarding the implementation of Regulation 274. Regulation 274 came into effect September 2012 pursuant to the *Putting Students First Act, 2012*. The intent of the regulation is to provide fairness and transparency in hiring practices for occasional teachers pursuing long term or contractual positions. The regulation requires boards to create a roster whereby teachers on the occasional list are interviewed and placed on a long term occasional roster list. Once on the roster, the teacher requires successful evaluation before they can be considered for contractual positions. Because there is a seniority component, principals must consider only the top five candidates on the roster when filling a vacancy.

Following the release of Regulation 274, a number of concerns were raised by various professional organizations and expressed to the Ministry. On August 8, 2013, the Deputy Minister released a memo indicating that the Ministry would review the regulation but repealing it was not under consideration. The Directions Evidence and Policy Research Group was engaged to begin conversations with boards related to Regulation 274 in two phases. The first phase involved conversations with provincial organizations where they gathered a sense of concerns. The Counsel of Senior Human Resources Officials wrote a communication outlining the benefits and challenges. Some of the challenges highlighted included the following:

- Inability to select the best candidate for position to address the unique needs of individual schools or positions.
- Inability to reflect diversity of community and student population.
- Disruption to the continuity of instruction in the classroom by mandating reposting of positions.
- Time burden on administrators with a number of processes for interviewing teachers.
- Long term effect on quality of teacher candidates.

On January 9, 2014 the Minister advised that Phase 2, the fact-finding phase would begin. The intent is to gather documented evidence of the impact of Regulation 274 from boards and employee groups across the province. Teleconferences or Skype meetings with board personnel and local union representatives will occur to gather responses to a series of specific questions. Further information regarding the next phase is not yet available.

It was confirmed that the Board is compliant with Regulation 274 and is implementing the necessary processes. Concerns were raised regarding specific skills that may be required that the top five candidates on the roster may not possess. It was confirmed that the process does recognize specific circumstances and allows the opportunity to look for suitable candidates further on in the list when specialized skills are being sought.

It was also noted that current contracts are set to expire on August 31, 2014. Clarification was sought regarding the timelines for the upcoming round of negotiations and the implications of Bill 122.

Trustee proposals and queries

An inquiry was made regarding marketing practices and how to support student enrolment in our school system. It was noted that we are marketing the Board as a system of choice and focusing our energy on our exceptional programs, students and employees. It was further noted that other boards face similar enrolment challenges and the effects of declining enrolment. A reference was made to the Ministry's focus on having boards work closely together to address needs, such as exploring opportunities to build shared facilities as part of the school board efficiencies and modernization initiative. It was recognized that our board collaborates with our neighbouring boards on a number of initiatives. Problem solving regarding any issues is addressed by the senior team. The director of education will follow up on this discussion.

Correspondence – None

The Program and Human Resources Committee moved into closed session at 6:45 p.m.