

**School District #75 (Mission)****Public Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Minutes**

**March 2, 2021, 3:30 pm  
Zoom Meeting**

**Members Present:** Board Chair, Tracy Loffler  
Vice Chair, Shelley Carter  
Trustee, Julia Renkema  
School Trustee, Randy Cairns  
Trustee, Rick McKamey

**Staff Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Angus Wilson  
Assistant Superintendent, Karen Alvarez  
Secretary-Treasurer, Corien Becker  
Director of Student Services Carolynn Schmor  
District Principal of Indigenous Education, Vivian Searwar  
Executive Assistant, Ilona Schmidt (Recorder)

District Counsellor - Meg Kruger, Principal - Rob Clark,  
Principal - Hardeep Grewal, District Inclusion Mentor  
Teacher – Shannon Bowsfield, Band Outreach Teacher -  
Glenda Scrimshaw, Indigenous Student Success Coaches -  
Katy Brookes and Don Cosens

**Others Present:** MTU Vice-President - Janise Nikolic, MTU President - Ryan  
McCarty, CUPE President - Faye Howell, DPAC Chair –  
Cheryl Blondin, DPAC Treasurer – Jacquelyn Wickham,  
MSS PAC – Dionne Hairsine

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm by the Chairperson. The Chair acknowledged that Mission Public Schools is held on Stó:lō Territory. There are four First Nation Bands within the boundaries of the Mission School District: Leq:a'mel, Sq'ewlets, Kwantlen, and Matsqui First Nations.

The MTU President arrived at 3:48pm.

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

MOVED and Seconded that the Agenda be adopted as presented.

## **CARRIED**

### **3. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

#### **3.1 Brain Architecture Game, District Counsellor - Meg Kruger**

WH & CM Counsellor

Trauma can bring up emotions. Trauma is deeply distressing event that goes beyond our ability to cope. Trauma Informed Schools: students in pain need to thrive. We need to understand how trauma can impact students. Brain architecture game. [Video played](#). Caregivers can prevent toxic stress from harming the brain. The Game brings a real sense of empathy to teachers, it is a strong message of hope and a gateway to foster conversations.

Dr Chuck Geddes/Dr Angela Murphy/Beth-Anne Cullen work together.

Group of 3-5 adults/staff can play with 9 sets SD75 has.

Meaningful presentation was acknowledged. There have been reports over challenges of Stó:lō on suicides. This game may be of great help. Trustee McKamey would like to connect to follow up on some specific issues. Conversation, connection, community creates healing. The Game can be used in lots of different contexts.

#### **3.2 MTU Tech Survey Presentation**

MSS Timetable & Workload increase - are there any comments? There is an incredible variety and comfort level with technology. At the high school level - one size fits all will likely not fit everyone.

Teachers would like to continue posting assignments online, and submitting homework online. Teachers miss the human/mental connection with students.

It was acknowledged how big of a change this way of teaching has been. The students miss seeing friends, and even miss teachers.

Parent rep has noted appreciation for Check my Mark & MyEd: Parents appreciate the teachers using MyEd and sharing information.

The Board noted it is disheartening to see challenges everyone faces, but everyone at the SD75 will work together to fix what we can. 33 of 81 teachers filled out the survey.

A Teacher has shared experience with Check My Mark, having less features, but allowing emailing one parent or all with one button. Staff

voted unanimously to go back to Check My Mark, but were not able to. MyEd takes about 30 mins to email a class.

It was also noted that high school students are on Zoom 5hrs in a day, and it is mentally exhausting.

## 4. CURRICULUM

### 4.1 Indigenous Education Update

The District Principal has thanked SD75 Management and Siwal Si'wes for their support in dealing with a tragedy in the Community.

The Indigenous Students Success Coaches and the Band Outreach teacher shared their program news. Currently, the department is looking for a liaison to work at the Band Outreach.

New large space is appreciated. Siwal Si'wes share space with Pathway to Employment

[Dwight Ballantyne Project](#) - presented to approximately 50 participants, and got a very positive response. Will be coming back in front of the Board.

Embedding Halq'emeylem with music

Archery is embraced and in high demand from schools.

Meeting with Leq:a'mel (hoping to extend it to others) to discuss on reserve students. Ministry contacted the District Principal asking how did we finish constructing bus shelters, as Sq'ewlets were completed as one of the first.

Don (High schools) & Katy (Middle Schools) = Teacher/Counsellors

The Indigenous Student Success Coaches meet the families where they are, work closely. Raven's Perch at HPMS has a homey atmosphere and provides academic, social, and emotional support.

A Story was shared: student needed one-on-one support, to create a sense of belonging. Coaches reached out to family, delivered food, technology. Developed trust with Parents. Visited home once a week to offer support. Tried reaching out virtually and connection started to drop off. Student was not engaging in Summit either. New approach was a "store-front" school once a week, where students can pick up a package, get some support, get some time with a teacher. Teacher or coach can monitor students' Mental Health, provide referrals to external agencies if needed. Careful transition from elementary to middle to secondary school. Transition Binders and Plans are created for each student.

The Band Outreach teacher does land walks with students daily, participating with each other. Reciprocal relationship with each other and communities are extremely important. The outreach nurtures respect for cultural integrity and keeping it intact.

Student feedback: Most like the Outreach program better, as they feel safer in a small school environment, in less crowded space, with an Indigenous teacher who understands them better.

A Comment was shared about the improved collaboration with Leq'a:mel, and Success coach with Elementary school children. Deroche students wrote poetry within 2wks of learning on the land. Education brought closer to the students made a great difference.

A question was asked if challenges with transitioning back to normal schools are anticipated post-Covid? There will likely be challenges. Patience and collaboration, commitment to students is needed. It will be addressed when it becomes a reality. Confident with SD75.

Inclusiveness will help. Developing the next step of transition, belief in themselves. The Board thanked the District Indigenous Principal and Staff and all their staff. It comes through how much the teachers care.

## **5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **5.1 Anti-Racism Policy**

At the December Committee of the Whole, the Board requested that the Draft Anti-Racism Policy, be reviewed and forwarded to the partner organizations for comment. Recently the policy has been shared with Middle and Secondary classes for their review and input. SD75 has not received any feedback from partner groups, however, has received student feedback.

Does the Committee want the feedback incorporated? Drafted into the policy?

Comment was made to change e/ Modeling: offering CHANGE TO mandating... staff and students ADD on a regular basis.

Policy should also cross reference AP114 Restorative practices

Comment was made to ADD word inclusive: Mission Public Schools is committed to a policy of respect and inclusive acceptance of the many cultures... Comment was made to REMOVE and change word tolerance vs. acceptance

Comment was made about inclusion upholding human rights - acceptance on inclusion may water down the meaning

In c/ Acknowledge true history of Canada, BC, and Mission .... ADD other minority groups in another bullet.

New curriculum does not have this content dictated in. It is more open, and is taught through the Indigenous lens. There are no specifics.

Anti-racism - to supply resources to teach a full history of Canada. We live on Turtle Island in indigenous peoples view.

## 6. STAFF REPORTS

### 6.1 MSS Timetable Update

Current MSS Timetable got approved in August. In January, a group of parents in Vancouver brought forward a motion of students not receiving enough instructional time. Report was sent back to the Ministry. There was a misunderstanding, as they thought students were not engaging when not in person. All has been clarified. MSS is providing enough instructional time. MTU presentation showed the concerns.

There was some interest exploring some aspects of this timetable for next year, such as compressed Wednesdays, to get support in the afternoon. Instructional time = mandatory time students are at school. The innovation cannot go ahead, unless time is added to other days.

### 6.2 Summit Update

Staff provided an update on current enrollment at Summit Learning Centre, as well as beginning to estimate enrollment for 2021/2022

The intention of the Board was not to hold seats beyond now. If students continue to attend Summit, we will not hold seats.

A question was asked if there will a survey? The Superintendent provided that there is intention to do a Survey in May. Summit started polling parents, and so far, 81 intend to register. Some people are registering kids to normal schools for September. How many are coming back? 25-30 are home-schooled. Kindergarten numbers are coming after Spring Break. Projected enrollment: 451 students registered for K to date.

Comment was made to consider talking to Principals. MSS is doing timetable requests by Spring Break. Parents may not be aware of the difficult process coming back, if they left the district. Students may have a hard time getting courses. Staffing and planning will be tricky.

At the beginning, seats were to be held till the February count. Board should revisit this and discuss. By July, majority of people in BC should be vaccinated. It should be expected students will return to normal school. Bring a Motion forward at Agenda Setting to draft a Motion for the next Public Board Meeting.

### 6.3 Student Outcomes

Grade 10 at MSS shows 31% fail in Math as opposed to 16% at the end of June last year. Almost double compared to previous years. Some kids will take the course again.

English 10, previous years report 5%, now 13% Failure  
The pandemic and virtual instruction has had a significant impact.

Question was asked about how representative is Semester 1 to year end?  
Can we compare Semester1 to Semester1? Normally, about 10% students fail. We are seeing the effect on education, but not all is lost. There can be Summer school, allowances next year, etc.

Question was asked if there is correlation between attendance and the results? This will be reviewed in more detail. A significant number of students log on for attendance. They figured out the system and are not in class. There is a gap of knowledge in math/socials. Teachers do not have an opportunity to get them to hand in work as they could in person.

Question was asked about catching students up next year to fill the gaps. This is a problem across the globe. It will take some time to see the effects.

The Board requested more detailed information about Math and English at MSS, and what is happening at the Middle schools? This information should be added to next Month COTW Agenda

Comment was made about kids having 2.5hrs of math/social studies etc... They have breaks (walks), and teachers are impressed how well it has been going. Problem arises when students miss a couple classes, they miss a lot.

#### 6.4 School Safety Forum Follow-up

- Meeting with Cindy Gale & Healing Circles regarding student working group.
- Messaged Principals to consider having school-based forums. Will get feedback next week about what is working and what is working not so well.
- Follow up call with FV LGBTQ tomorrow.
- Safe school consortium - offer to attend.
- Feedback came from parents about not having a resource to help children use Social media properly. Is there any tool available? Safer Schools together would like to host a series of workshops, for parents (digital footprint, cyber bullying, etc).
- Several Staff had digital threat assessment training, and more coming.
- DPAC hosted workshops within schools, to teach parents about the Internet., but attendance has been fairly low in the past.
- In the past, Hatzic Middle had RCMP come in, presenting to parents about trends, etc. Very informative.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

### 7.1 Flags and Inclusivity

Should there be a sentence or two in the policy for inclusivity?

The Board should re-visit policy and wording, so we can support all students in the district. Is there a need for more complexity?

### 7.2 3-Year School District Calendar

The Committee reviewed the proposed 3-year Calendars. One wrinkle to consider: Spring break is normally a week, most districts do 2 weeks. SD75 may have more link to Abbotsford than to Maple Ridge, so the spring break days should be changed to match Abbotsford.

A question was asked to provide more clarity for this change. Is it based on sports? It is based on work/vacations etc... Mission community seems to have more connection with Abbotsford.

A comment was made about February Non-instructional day for report cards distribution/PT Conferences. MSS has been moving the day to April. April may be too late for kids who are not on top of their work.

The Committee discussed and agreed on aligning the Spring Break with Abbotsford. MTU has no objection to submit 3yr calendar.

The Board should vote on submitting the proposed 3yr calendar. This last year has showed how quickly things can change. SD75 has an option to amend calendars after they have been submitted. Compare what the other districts are doing.

### 7.3 Dress Code

Chilliwack and Victoria have made a new gender-neutral dress code. It should be central to the School District, not different at every school, with exception to the Traditional Academy and uniforms.

"Distracting" has been used often. This word is disrespectful to females. Many policies were written a long time ago and should be updated.

6:20pm:

MOVED and Seconded that the meeting be extended by 10 minutes.

**CARRIED.**

DPAC commented that Non-Gender based Dress Code should be written from a Student-focused perspective, and adopted District wide. Staff needs to follow it as well.

Dress codes can be interpreted the wrong way easily. Enforceability is the hardest. Comment from Admin - it would be very helpful to have a uniform rule. As a female Admin - common sense conversations with kids have

worked so far. Having told to go home and change can have a big impact on kids' self-esteem.

A question was asked about problems with enforce-ability? Most dress codes have been targeted towards females. What is the purpose of that? What does that do for relationship building?

Comment was provided, that conversations about time and place of wearing certain things "i.e. wearing a bikini" need to happen.

Offensive shirts (are often worn boys) \*\* Add to next week's BOE agenda.

## **8. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

### **8.1 Meeting Minutes from the Special Committee of the Whole RE: Amended Budget, January 26, 2021**

MOVED and Seconded that the Special Committee of the Whole minutes dated January 26, 2021 be approved.

**CARRIED**

### **8.2 Special Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes, February 16, 2021**

MOVED and Seconded that the Special Committee of the Whole minutes dated February 16, 2021 be approved.

**CARRIED**

## **9. INFORMATION ITEMS**

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED and Seconded that the Board adjourn the meeting.**

**CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm.

Signed by T. Loffler

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Chair, Board of Education

Signed by C. Becker

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Secretary-Treasurer

The minutes were approved on  
April 6, 2021 at the Committee of  
the Whole meeting.