

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

**February 22, 2022, 3:30 pm**

- Members Present:** Board Chair, Tracy Loffler  
Vice-Chair, Randy Cairns  
Trustee, Shelley Carter  
Trustee, Julia Renkema  
Trustee, Rick McKamey
- Staff Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Angus Wilson  
Secretary-Treasurer, Corien Becker  
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, Derek Welsh  
Assistant Superintendent, Karen Alvarez  
Director of Student Services Carolynn Schmor  
Director of Operations, Dana MacLean  
District Principal of International Education, Collen Hannah  
Executive Assistant, Ilona Schmidt (Recorder)
- Others Present:** Principal Angela Condon, Teacher Librarian Angela Bouts,  
CUPE President, Nansy Gibson, MTU President, Ryan Mc Carty

**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'èwlets, Kwantlen, and Matsqui First Nations.

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MOVED and Seconded THAT the Agenda be adopted as presented.  
CARRIED**

**3. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

**4. CURRICULUM**

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**6. STAFF REPORTS**

**6.1 Enrolment Projections**

There are some reductions in Riverside enrolment. Trustees would like to find out similar info as in 2017- long-range facilities plan - Ministry of education projected how many we may have now. We are working on a long-range enrolment forecast, which is to come later in the year.

Our info is more conservative than Baragar; however, the Ministry is projecting a decrease, contrary to what we see in reality.

## 6.2 2022-2023 Preliminary Budget Discussion

The Secretary-Treasurer would like to have a conversation about the preliminary items considered. Strategic priority is covering everything, but the budget is more detailed.

*Mentor Teacher position:* the work is important in developing literate, numerate citizens, and applying mental health initiatives. We have significant needs identified in the FSAs. We need to have someone available alongside teachers. Students need choice, and things need to be revisited. Teachers also need support.

A comment was made about the HAWD Report at Siwal Si'wes - Elders are also talking about more math support (possible future math camp)

MTU noted that the new positions are drawing teachers from a very limited pool. The Mentor teachers are an invaluable resource; however, during the Omicron wave, the Mentor Teachers were called in as TTOCs to teach classes at schools to cover absences.

Trustees acknowledge that when staff go to sites to teach, they are not able to properly do their jobs. The Mentor Teacher is a priority position

A suggestion was made to add a Math mentor for Middle to Secondary

*Mental Health support:* Emotion-focused school Support - Dr. Adele LaFrance, training next week with non-enrolling teachers. Learning for counsellors.

6-week series for all of CUPE staff: Trauma-informed strategies, peaceful schools, and more. These will likely be ongoing, repeated annually. We are short of counsellors at MSS. Some Elementary schools are short of counsellors, but we have been unable to recruit new counselling staff. New referrals are decreasing, but there is still an increased demand.

The Director of Student Services is working with complex care and intervention strategies. Looking at all areas of the brain that can be coming from previous childhood trauma. Presenting to Staff and working with individual students. Her skills are being spread out. Adults understand that if we are regulated, the kids will be regulated as well. This position has had a significant impact.

Wellness activities for staff: Walking Club after school; Cooking Club.

DPAC would like more low-barrier student support - to see more programs for kids, approachable by the general public, where there is not a \$120/hr price tag or clinicians screening who qualifies for help and who does not.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is provided as a school-wide effort, trauma-informed practice is taught at the classroom level.

A question was asked about counselling upgrades for teachers. What can we offer people if they have a counselling background? Mental health needs to be championed and tools need to get into kids' hands.

BAA course on mental health - we may borrow from another area (Advisory class at HPMS addresses the basics of mental health)

*School Level Administration:* some smaller schools need more admin time. Two city schools do not have a VP (Cherry Hill and West Heights). The Superintendent suggested there is a need to consider adjustments. A question was asked about the option of splitting some time between other schools. When VP splits between teaching and admin, and commutes between sites, time on sites is lost.

The Secretary-Treasurer provided that we have called YCW and liaisons in to cover the shortage of counsellors. We are doing what we can to bridge the gaps. The Safety in Schools, Substance Use Liaison needs to be someone energetic, proactive, out and about with students. Some of the students are struggling in Middle and Secondary. Having a strong YCW team, we have been able to shift people around. The specialist provides direction, YCW provides the service. We are using the people we have to support as much as we can.

A question was asked about the roadblocks to having enough counsellors. There are simply not enough. SD counsellors also need to be teachers. Being a teacher is extremely important, so they can be on the same page with their colleagues.

*Technology needs:* adding more devices into the system. Every school requested more carts. Are there any specific devices we should consider? All should be vetted by IT before purchase.

*Grounds:* we have been hiring some of the additional grounds staff in the Summer for clean-up. Several schools have been in disrepair.

*Additional space at Riverside:* ITA certification for all the programs we offer is needed. We need more classroom and shop space. We are looking at different options. We need to relocate Facilities from the building. The growth seems to be quite steep, and we may have to look at even reopening Ferndale in the future in order to have enough space for students.

A suggestion was made that Riverside does not need to be all in one spot. Some of the Indigenous communities out east may be interested in offering some courses and may have space. Zoning/environmental requirements need to be considered.

Looking at enrolment growth for the next 10 years, we need to make significant investments into Facilities and possible necessary upgrades.

The Director of Operations provided that there are no facilities workers at Riverside anymore. They only use the shop, paint booth, and key cutting booth when needed. Everything else has moved to Ferndale.

Ongoing care for facilities: maintaining facilities - 2 foremen retired, and we have not back-filled the positions yet. We recognize that additional students, and fuller schools create more pressure on the Facilities staff. We are not doing the bare-bones minimum that we did several years ago, but we may need to add some positions back into the budget. Our buildings are aging, maintenance is becoming more intense. Our newest building has been built in 1996. There is an

increase in demand (ventilation, HVAC, electrical, plumbing). Redoing the entire lighting system adds a lot more work.

The Superintendent commented on sustainability and the need of finding the balance of the use of the buildings. (user groups cause wear & tear... BCSTA has put out a document about underfunding facilities, previously reviewed).

Future of Childcare facilities - we may be asked in the future to change. ECE should be in schools, but there needs to be proper funding available. If we had to provide childcare...what are the priorities we need to start with to provide childcare? Where do we see the biggest need?

We have been approached by a group with interest to put childcare on school land. We do not have the space. If interested, we can support, but they would need to provide funds to provide a portable, while we provide the land at Cherry Hill, WH, or Mission Central. The Ministry expects private, non-profit, as well as SDs to have their own childcare. A comment was made that Silverdale has a Childcare in school, and the children become are very comfortable there. The positive aspect has been recognized.

*IT:* the number of licenses has increased. Microsoft costs per license are also increasing.

Overall Sustainability needs to be built into the planning process.

*MEDICAL Benefits, Worksafe premiums* - all base premiums have been increased significantly, which have also impacted the planning of the budget.

We need to be able to balance the budget in the future as well. Some we can control, others we cannot. Inflation has increased significantly as well. If costs have increased by 6%, and our funding will be increased by 2.6%... we will not be able to balance the budget.

We have a scale for WCB - our access to WCB has increased, and our premium has also increased. The base rate for schools has gone up significantly. We are trying to hire a safety advisor position. There are a lot of slips, trips and falls.

Utility costs have also gone up (natural gas). With COVID, funding was provided to us by the government. We have a lot of cost savings as well because of Covid. Those will also swing back (field trips etc) as we normalize.

Partners were invited to share priorities. Bargaining - working relationships will improve student achievement. Bargaining - in substitute bucket.

A question was asked about restoring the teacher-librarian funding removed with Covid. Items to focus on:

- YCW / Special Education
- Dust Collector
- Settlement worker
- Navigator position
- Stop Arm Camera
- Additional blocks at MSS

Trustee Renkema suggested creating a needs-based budget, to see what it would look like. That way, we could take things away, that we do not absolutely need, and may enhance the budget discussion.

Needs-based budget - who is to decide what the need is? We have a collective agreement that is very prescriptive. We are watching the budget very cautiously. We are being very transparent about what we are adding, with notice for discussion ahead of time. A note was made that we did not take things away due to budgeting, we had to cut certain expenses due to Covid.

A comment was made that the Board has done a needs-based budget in the past. Is it going to change anything? It is a lot of work to generate... In the past, needs-based budgets have not worked. It would be nice to see how much we would need if we were to put all the items in

The Secretary-Treasurer suggested a current base for the budget, starting where we are right now, and adding/removing items as we go. It would give us an operating direction on where we are moving towards.

Moving forward, we should have a clearer picture of our new budget.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**8. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**9. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Original signed by T. Loffler

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Chair, Board of Education

Original signed by C. Becker

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Secretary-Treasurer

The minutes were approved on April 5, 2022,  
at the Committee of the Whole meeting.