

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

**May 10, 2022, 3:30 pm
Zoom Meeting**

Members Present: Board Chair, Tracy Loffler
Vice-Chair, Randy Cairns
Trustee, Shelley Carter
Trustee, Julia Renkema

Members Absent: Trustee, Rick McKamey

Staff Present: Superintendent of Schools, Angus Wilson
Secretary-Treasurer, Corien Becker
Director of Finance, Derek Welsh
Director of Student Services Carolynn Schmor
Assistant Superintendent, Karen Alvarez
Director of Operations, Dana MacLean
District Principal of International Education, Collen Hannah
Executive Assistant, Ilona Schmidt (Recorder)

Staff Absent: District Principal of Indigenous Education, Vivian Searwar

Others Present: CUPE President, Nansy Gibson, MTU President, Ryan McCarty

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 within the traditional, ancestral, unceded and shared lands of the Stó:lo people, which include Sq'éwlets, Leq'á:mel, Sema:th, Matheqwí and Qwó:ltl'el 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 2021-2022 Operating Fund Year-End Forecast

The Secretary-Treasurer reviewed and summarized the financial forecast information prepared by the Director of Finance. SD75 does not need to draw as much from the Surplus as we anticipated. Staff would like the Board's direction as to where to allocate surplus funds.

The report will be coming to the public board meeting, for formal direction.

6.2 2022/2023 Budget

1. Enrolment: A small shift to Riverside can be seen. Staff have not seen a shift into regular programs as expected. We have lower enrolment for Kindergarten than we projected. Higher numbers may come in September.

2. Staffing: no cross-boundaries have been approved at this time. Increased divisions are observed at the Middle schools. We have also added more divisions to MSS.

3. International: budgeting for 130 students.

4. Grant rates: Our difference is around \$500,000 until the province reviews the grant rates. We are supporting all employees by paying sick leave. Benefit costs are going up dramatically.

Questions: MTU inquired about the projected increase in costs of Benefits. Rates are driving the increase. Inflation is also putting big pressure on budgeting.

CUPE inquired about the new sick day legislation and noted the Indigenous Education decrease: on the EA line, we are under budget, but we are over budget on casual EA costs. We expect a reversal next year.

A note was made: It is a bargaining year - when bargaining is resolved, we will go over all of these figures in the amended budget in February.

The Board chair noted that we should be cautious with the use of the Surplus, and that input from MTU and CUPE clarifying needs to be addressed is appreciated.

The Board Vice-chair clarified that setting the contingency % aside is still something we should do.

CUPE shared that BSWs in a lot of elementary schools do not have the time to do all the jobs they are asked to do.

EAs do not get paid for the extra time (they stay to help students as they know it is needed). EAs are paid bell to bell, it feels that every minute is tracked, but many put in extra time. Some have been approved for extra 15 mins, and it takes the pressure off. Some do not ask for extra time to be paid.

MTU's top priority are TTOCs, and MTU feels that qualified applicants are not hired and are turned away.

A comment was made that all the operating fund changes are based on the amended budget. If a position was not filled, it becomes a part of the surplus.

The Secretary-Treasurer would like to hear opinions on the Additional needs on P.13.

A comment was made that more special needs children are coming in and that a special needs bus may make sense to obtain.

Capital planning: 2 larger buses are being replaced this year, which will give us a spare bus in the end.

MTU inquired about the additional teaching blocks for MSS. Those additional 4 blocks are to allow for flexibility of the timetable. The Assistant Superintendent will confirm, but MSS may be OK.

A question was asked about Riverside and satisfying ITA requirements. We have a list of equipment that needs upgrading. We will use local capital to purchase some of these.

The Director of Finance will provide more details at a later time. The list is coming directly from ITA.

CUPE inquired about MSS YCW labelled as EA. YCWs are included in the EA group for rolling up costs (in accounting). Currently, they have 1. Another YCW for Summit etc. With high needs, more support is needed. MSS was down a couple of counsellors this year, and this is a way to bring support. Special Ed teacher mentoring EA. Not all teachers/ EAs have the same skill set. It would be beneficial to have a Special Ed teacher or an SLP to support the EAs. 2day/week.

A comment was made about the increased number of students needing support and increased anxiety in general. ITA – meeting standards is extremely important, so the students get their qualifications. Ferndale - WCB item, it is important to have the proper technology.

Clarification for “Storefront/Outreach at MSS” - students can pick work up and go elsewhere to work on it.

IT foreman communicated with Microsoft and advised of increased costs of licensing. Teams licenses will go up by \$27,000 next year, \$70,000 the year after, and even higher later. The computer replacement program is falling behind. Good 5-yr plan, some of the computers do not even meet the need being taught. Costs to upgrade technology are increasing rapidly.

A comment was made about the importance of a brand new dust collector for Ferndale so that the Facilities employees can move there completely. Carpentry facilities need to meet WorkSafe requirements.

Exhaust transportation venting system - Air-care style exhaust for the bus garage has been purchased and will need a specialized installation.

A question was asked about the frequency of teacher shortage at Riverside. Not often, as they are small in staffing. At Riverside, the issue is the specialization of the teachers.

Currently, the biggest issue for SD75 is not enough teachers, and lack of mental health support. We try to support students and staff in whichever way we can.

The Director of Finance provided that the Literacy mentor teacher will be added for the next budget planning meeting. Much of the surplus has been built on Covid-related issues. There is a desire to get qualified people, but we cannot

seem to find enough. A comment was made, to get more Speech pathologists, to upgrade facilities, while finding a balance.

The Vice-chair suggested using 1 million to 1.2 million and still keeping some funds for contingency.

IT gets requests for new apps and programs – the IT business analyst would help with streamlining the work, to move from paper-based to computer system.

A question was asked if hiring a consultant as needed could be considered. It could be considered. We have to write programs regularly, to extract data. We have not built any capacity in-house as of yet.

A question was asked if we need to have a list of additional equipment/support? On p. 9, Allocation to local capital: vehicles, etc. \$180,000 is related to technology (PA, telecom, computers). The bulk of the funds is available for computers (also principal and interest payments on loans). We may add some more.

The Board chair indicated support for the target of a surplus of \$720,000, and a contingency target of \$1,400,000.

A note was made that mental health supports are done through talk therapy, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. Some students are not able to speak, so extra support is still needed.

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 4:35 pm.

Original signed by T. Loffler

Chair, Board of Education

Original signed by C. Becker

Secretary-Treasurer

The minutes were approved on May 31, 2022, at the Special Committee of the Whole meeting.