

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

**January 11, 2022, 3:30 pm
Zoom Meeting**

- Members Present:** Board Chair, Tracy Loffler
Vice-Chair, Randy Cairns
Trustee, Shelley Carter
Trustee, Julia Renkema
Trustee, Rick McKamey (arrived 3:45 pm)
- Staff Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Angus Wilson
Secretary-Treasurer, Corien Becker
Assistant Superintendent, Karen Alvarez
Director of Operations, Dana MacLean
District Principal of Indigenous Education, Vivian Searwar
Director of HR, Tina Phelps
Executive Assistant, Ilona Schmidt (Recorder)
- Others Present:** MTU Vice President, Shannon Bowsfield, Mentor Teacher,
Jennifer Lane, DPAC Chair, Cheryl Blondin, Indigenous
Mentor Teacher, Peggy Janicki, Principal, Angela Condon,

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 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

3.1 HR Department Update

The Director of Human Resources provided an update on the HR department's happenings. Items discussed included:

- Special exemption for teachers with Indigenous background,
- Staffing,
- Education fairs are still virtual,
- Communication and training on new processes.
- Technology - new way to access job postings, streamlining the process

- Onboarding/orientation for new employees, shared equity language guide, disability language guide.
- Provincial policy guidelines are being updated
- Bargaining is in session, CUPE bargaining coming up.

Only the new specific positions ask staff to self-identify indigenous ancestry. Trustee Cairns suggested promoting the specific positions requiring Indigenous ancestry.

3.2 Authentic Library Resources (P. Janicki, J. Lane)

Jenn Lane, Virtual Teacher Librarian, works with Peggy Janicki, Indigenous Mentor Teacher. Policy and Procedures have language about resources that are inclusive, support Reconciliation and promote Diversity in children's books. The goal is to have a 6% representation of Indigenous characters and provide the most accurate information while reducing further harm.

Many non-indigenous authors have written stories, published books with stories, without permission. The stories are copyrighted by Indigenous families/sources. (Example: Raven by Gerald McDermott: Example from Dr. Jan Hare, UBC)

The Mentor Teachers are moving along, heading towards the middle of the project. This initiative is a 3-5 yr plan to complete. The students should have a choice in what they are reading. The collection contains approximately 8000 resources. So far, over 300 authors were identified and removed, were authorized to be recycled, not donated further.

A question was asked if any of the books can be donated? Or do they have to be recycled? Novel sets with hurtful stereotypes or racism were removed. Some individual novels can still be used by a school library, but not the SWSW library.

Trustees would like access to the slide presentation and asked if the 6% indigenous character representation goal is for our community? It is a typical practice. Is there a way to have a publisher aware if the content is authentic? Trustees and DPAC would like to help and will welcome suggestions.

The PowerPoint presentation has been shared provincially at the Pro-D day, and our Mentor Teachers are leading the way for all Librarians. Do other school districts get the list of the books that "have been put under the sink?" Each SD is on its own journey. The list is not shared publicly. "*Touching Spirit Bear*" - not recommended, not an authentic piece. This book was written out of humility. No request to remove from the curriculum has been made to teachers. The list was shared with teacher-librarians in Mission and alternatives have been offered. The Mentor Teachers are not directing teachers to choose resources.

4. CURRICULUM

4.1 Monthly Curriculum Update

The Assistant Superintendent shared plans for Continuity of Learning, including possibilities to pivot if needed due to functional closures. Some schools/classes may need to move instruction temporarily online (for a week at a time if needed) due to staff shortages.

Staff is focusing on connection, relationships, community, an opportunity for challenge, curiosity and inquiry.

SD75 is using Teams, My Blueprint, Scholantis if online. No longer using Google Classroom or ZOOM.

A question was asked if we are keeping up identifying students' IEP goals/needs? We do not want students falling through the "cracks". We are still focusing on IEP goals, starting where the students are at. We cannot barrel through a generic curriculum and leave students behind. Everybody seems to be dealing with some delay at this point in time. Globally, we are losing pace. There is a backlog of testing to be done in the community. More EAs have been hired. We are focusing on learning, not on completing a task.

The Board Chair indicated that we need to have specific conversations about the Elementary, Middle, and Secondary schools, sector-wide. There are structural differences.

The Superintendent advised that optional templates for teachers were provided to use for planning for continuity of learning. Elementary VS Middle VS Secondary. Graduation and pressures to meet certain levels are still present, even though delays are experienced globally.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5.1 Child Care Policy

MOVED and Seconded THAT the draft Child Care Facilities Policy be reviewed based on the formal public engagement feedback, be updated as necessary, and forwarded to the Public Meeting in January to be considered for approval.

CARRIED

A comment was made about hours of service and that Daycare Licensees should be open 6:00 am-6 pm to accommodate people commuting.

Policy, Item 5: The Board will assess,, - There is an ongoing need for childcare, people are on waiting lists. A survey should be sent out for local stakeholders and staff, to see what the actual need is.

P. 10: 12.1 Description of direct/indirect costs: 3 of 4 licensees are for-profit, being charged business rate. We should show the calculation of fees based on location (urban vs rural area)

Leasor – we should list how to submit grievances, concerns, what we (Board/SD75) are responsible for.

The Secretary-Treasurer provided, that she reached out to the City of Mission to begin discussion on conducting a survey on Childcare. Once the policy is in place, the cost structure will be reviewed. The current cost structure does not reflect the new policy.

A question was asked about P.10, 11.3 d - access to learning opportunities.... do we need to have language about outdoor time or portables at certain locations in the future, to accommodate needs?

A question was asked about the cost of opening school earlier?

A question was asked about P. 7 - Assess the need for childcare - what is ongoing assessment? Childcare has always been important and needed. The government needs to be more proactive to make sure the board can fulfill the mandate. Do we have staff to do this work every 6 mths/year?

Language from the Ministerial order - policy promotes the use of the property for childcare. The Secretary-Treasurer discussed that we do not have capacity or staff, and foremost, we do not have the space. We need to work hand in hand with the City. Periodic assessment should be done, jointly with the City.

BCSTA: has heard the sector loud and clear, that there is not enough staff and capacity. Ministry of Children will soon fall under the Ministry of Education purview. We can continue to adapt the policy in the future as needed.

5.2 Student Clothing Policy

MOVED and Seconded THAT the draft Student Clothing Policy be reviewed based on the formal public engagement feedback, be updated as necessary, and forwarded to the Public Meeting in January to be considered for approval.

CARRIED

Eliminating procedure: there will be one policy for all, providing direction. A comment was made to add a line that applies to all schools except Hillside.

5.3 Employee Service Recognition Policy

MOVED and Seconded THAT the draft Employee Service Recognition Policy be reviewed based on the formal public engagement feedback, be updated as necessary, and forwarded to the Public Meeting in January to be considered for approval.

CARRIED

A comment was made that some employees have been in MPSD for some time. Is this a new recognition? Is this going to be retroactive? The 10-yr mark may have an overlap. We are catching 9 years at once.

A comment was made to recognize staff for their loyalty. We are acknowledging the employees and the job they do. A suggestion was made to give a District pen for 5-yrs mark. A possible amendment could be introduced at the Board Meeting. A 5-yr interval could be inserted if directed.

- 5.4 Financial Planning, Financial Progress & Performance Reporting Policy
MOVED and Seconded THAT the draft Financial Planning, Progress and Performance Reporting Policy be reviewed based on the formal public engagement feedback, be updated as necessary, and forwarded to the Public Meeting in January to be considered for approval.

CARRIED

A question was asked if the Ministry is providing a template when mandating this type of reporting. No templates will be provided, other than the Budget Bylaw which is standard. Additional financial information reports are not mandated. Ministry is recognizing that each SD has some unique characteristics. Each SD reports differently. SD75 is trying to find the right mix of information so that people read it. BCASBO is providing some templates and resources. Some districts do multi-year financial planning, but we do not have the resources in the Finance department to prepare indepth plans across multiple years.

- 5.5 Policy Reviews

A comment was made to unify the formats of the dates in the summary. The policy is the work of the Board, but the Board work is continuous and may span across to the next Board.

A comment was made that the Trustee code of Ethical conduct should be updated/reviewed, as it can be a helpful guiding document for the new elections.

6. STAFF REPORTS

- 6.1 Continuity of Learning

The Superintendent introduced continuity of learning plans for possible functional closures when teachers/students may be sick. We need to be flexible and adaptable quickly.

Functional closure - staffing shortage – we are unable to provide in-person instruction.

Medical closure - unlikely to happen, as Omicron is spreading and evolving much faster.

25% absence in small schools vs large schools - staffing is very different

Differently observed in the employee groups - Continuity: if we do not have enough bus drivers? Not enough BSWs? CSWs? Teachers away?

If a school becomes very short of staff, the school can move into online learning mode for a week.

Complications arise when other schools have similar problems. Are teachers well enough to return to work after a week? The plans will differ from site to site.

How does instruction happen after? Middle/secondary - scheduled instructional meetings.

A question was asked about student/staff attendance so far. There has been some staff shortage at the Middle schools. Attendance at school - 10-20% are away.

A question was asked about the accountability when a school is functionally closed? Is the accountability coming from the Principal? Yes. Day 1, figuring out what will be done, day 2, instruction. Most Principals have been consulted.

Masks: about half the kids showed up without masks. Staff handed them out. The consumption of masks by the SD is significant.

Elementary/Middle schools are very different - parents claimed that they were inundated with teachers reaching out to them.

Teacher in charge - covering class, reaching out to colleagues, etc.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Social Media - Derogatory and Harassing Comments

The Superintendent opened a discussion on comments on Social Media. It is very challenging to navigate through the online world. One staff member resigned due to negative commentary online.

There is behaviour that may have been acceptable in the past, that is not acceptable now.

A comment was made that teachers become victims of rampant, negative comments online. When the admin is supportive of the teacher, staff appreciate the support. Online groups, such as Mission Neighbours are not an area we can control. Admins need to be supportive of the staff.

Social Media platforms - parents can be very cutting and mean. There is some communication breakdown, where people feel that it is ok to use derogatory language online. There should be a protocol followed.

Some comments were aimed at ESWs, YCWs, and others. A suggestion was made that we need to act in a respectful manner and resolve differences constructively. Respectful School District – can we be holding everybody accountable?

A comment was made to introduce the Safe & Caring Schools policy: Can we put this policy as a guide on conduct on our social media platforms or provide protocol on who to contact if someone has a concern?

DPAC - PAC perspective - social media to be used as an information-sharing platform, not a discussion. Working on some social media strategies and information for parents in a more positive atmosphere.

A question was asked if anyone reaches out to the Admins of the platforms to block the negative discussions. Often, they are complied with, but not always. We can block commentary on posts. We all have to be cautious on all social media platforms. Bullying and intimidation are never ok.

The Secretary-Treasurer provided that we can create marketing material to educate people about respectful behaviour. We can do a good marketing campaign on social media for engaging everyone to change their behaviour.

Some of the groups are private. People take screenshots and share... and it is very difficult to control. MTU would support a good campaign on RESPECT, as we cannot afford to lose more teachers.

7.2 Board Meeting Procedures

MOVED and Seconded THAT the following motion be forwarded to the January public Board meeting for consideration:

THAT the Board meeting procedures be amended to replace “Section 6 Electronic Participation in Meetings” as follows:

1. **Electronic Participation in Meetings**

1. To ensure quorum is achievable, electronic participation in Board, Committee of the Whole, and Advisory Committee meetings will be supported when voting and non-voting members are unable to attend in person.
2. When required, any meeting may be held entirely through electronic means.
3. Electronic participation includes telephone, video, audio, or other electronic conferencing devices.
4. All meeting participants joining a meeting through electronic means must provide their first and last name. Participants joining an electronic meeting that do not identify provide their first and last name will be removed from the meeting.

CARRIED

A comment was made for 6.4 all meeting participants "must identify themselves" should be clarified to "must provide their first and last name".

7.3 Strategic Plan - Implementation and Monitoring Plan

Making our Strategic plan more effective: We should be stating what we did 1st, what we did 2nd, etc. We can add a one page addition with an implementation plan. Schools will be able to better identify their needs for the Budget and align with the Strategic Plan. The Board would like to refer this item to February COTW to discuss further.

8. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

8.1 Special Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes RE: Boundary Review, November 30, 2021

MOVED and Seconded that the Special Committee of the Whole Meeting RE: Boundary Review minutes dated November 30, 2021, be approved.

CARRIED

8.2 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes, December 7, 2021

MOVED and Seconded that the Committee of the Whole minutes dated December 7, 2021, be amended.

CARRIED

AMENDMENT: fix quote from BCSTA p.78 if you don't have a sense of belonging.....

p. 76 remove "cafeteria" from applied skills as there are many more.

MOVED and Seconded that the Committee of the Whole minutes dated December 7, 2021, be approved as amended.

CARRIED

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and Seconded that the Board adjourn the meeting.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 6:18 pm.

Original signed by T. Loffler
Chair, Board of Education

Original signed by C. Becker
Secretary-Treasurer

The minutes were approved on
February 1, 2022, at the Public
Committee of the Whole meeting.