

RENFREW COUNTY CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of the General Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Held in the Board Room, on Monday, February 26, 2024 at 4:45 p.m.

Dave Howard, Vice-Chair of the Board, opened the meeting with a prayer. He asked that the following people be remembered in our prayers: Yvette Gaudette (sister of Anne Haley, Trustee), Barclay Buttle (father-in-law of Stephen Carr, Warehouseperson), Tony Vernon (stepfather of Melissa Carroll-Dubeau, Principal of Cathedral School), and John Kelford (stepfather of Jessica Tabbert, Finance Officer at the Board Office).

Mr. Howard then began the meeting by acknowledging the traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin people.

RESOLUTION #1

Moved by Pat O’Grady
Seconded by Andy Bray

That Trustees move into In-Camera Committee in Committee of the Whole.

...Carried

RESOLUTION #2

Moved by Pat O’Grady
Seconded by Susan Artymko

That Trustees move out of In-Camera Committee in Committee of the Whole.

...Carried

ROLL CALL

Present:	Chairperson	- Bob Schreader (virtual)
	Vice Chairperson	- David Howard
	Trustees	- Andy Bray - Susan Artymko (virtual) - Anne Haley (virtual) - Jerry Lavalley - Pat O’Grady
	Student Representative	- Elena Valliquette - Ben Wood
	Director of Education	- Mark Searson
	Associate Director of Business Affairs & Treasurer	- Mary Lynn Schauer
	Superintendent of Educational Services	- Clint Young
	Superintendent of Educational Services	- Heidi Fraser
	Superintendent of Educational Services	- Derek Lennox
	Recording Secretary	- Nancy Levasseur

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION #3

Moved by Andy Bray
 Seconded by Anne Haley
 That the Agenda for the February 26, 2024 General Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board be approved.

...Carried

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION #4

Moved by Jerry Lavalley
 Seconded by Pat O'Grady
 That the Minutes of the General Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board held in the Board Room on Monday, January 29, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

DISBURSEMENT LIST

RESOLUTION #5

Moved by Anne Haley
 Seconded by Pat O'Grady
 That the listing of payments as shown on FEB2 be approved as presented.

...Carried

PRESENTATION

Adult Faith Formation

David Afelskie, the Board's Religious Education and Family Life Resource Coordinator and Mark Searson, Director of Education, gave a presentation on the Board's Alpha program and the work that is being done for adult faith formation.

Mark said that he is currently in his 4th year as Director and part of his entrance plan was to bring more focus on adult faith. It was also an initiative of our former Bishop Guy Desrochers, who created the Office for the New Evangelization within the Diocese of

Pembroke, in an effort to reach out to those who do not have faith or who have become disconnected from the church. Last year, the Board sent a team to the ICE Symposium, which centered on adult faith formation. Part of the discussions were on what we are doing for our parents and we felt that the Alpha program would be something that people would be interested in. Our Board's Parent Involvement Committee agreed to use PIC funds to cover the cost of the program.

Nineteen people have signed up for the program. It is 11 weeks long and is being held at Bishop Smith Catholic High School. We provide a light supper and childcare is provided. The parents gather to watch a video and then break into smaller groups to unpack what they have learned. It is designed to be very open, with a lot of meaningful discussion and questions. Mark then showed the trustees a short promotional video of the Alpha program.

The cost breakdown for the program is approximately \$6,100, which includes food and childcare. The Board's GSN funding is \$5,818 for PIC and \$12,500 for the Parents Reaching Out grants. Typically, the PRO grants are used towards our guest speaker for Christian Community Day and the PIC evening the evening before. However, this year we are offering breakout sessions for CCD instead of a keynote speaker so there are ample funds to cover the cost of the Alpha program.

David Afelskie then gave an overview of the various adult faith formation opportunities that the Board provides for our staff. He advised that these all occur usually outside of school hours, and the biggest commitment for staff is their time. Some of these opportunities include the Discovery program offered by Catholic Christian Outreach, which is part of their adult faith growth series. We have had about 25 people take this program over the last three years and it is offered to teachers, principals and EAs. David also has a weekly newsletter that he sends to all principals to share with their staff. We are also sending five participants from our Board to the annual EOCCC Mid-Year Retreat. The Board also offers religious education courses, geared to teachers working towards their additional qualifications. Last year, Fr. Ryan Holly offered a Catholic Faith Learning Series, with three evening sessions of Catholic faith development.

Bob Schreader said he was pleased to see the number of people who are attending the Alpha program and asked if we are considering offering the program in future years. Mark replied that once the current program has concluded, the steering committee will review it and decide whether to offer it again.

Pat O'Grady asked whether we are teaching the rosary in our classrooms and David said that it is on a school-by-school basis. During Catholic Education Week each year, schools also have the opportunity to pray the Living Rosary and during Lent it is always encouraged.

Dave Howard asked if any of our non-Catholic staff have shown an interest in these programs. Mark said that there are some who are non-Catholic who attend the Alpha program and David advised that in his role, he looks for that opportunity with beginning teachers and does reach out to them through the NTIP program. Dave responded that these new teachers are going to be the shepherds; our senior participants in our

churches are passing away and the traditions need to be passed down to the younger generation. He said he is looking forward to hearing about the outcome of the Alpha program and how it will continue.

Bob Schreder thanked Mark and David for all the work they've done to provide these programs. Mark added that Angela Watson, Jason Yutronkie, Kylie Gibson and Julie Shreenan have all done a lot of work as well in helping with the Alpha program.

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

RCCDSB Secondary Schools

Elena Valliquette, Student Trustee for St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew and Ben Wood, Student Trustee for Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke each reported on activities taking place in the Board's two secondary schools.

St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew

- The Co-Op Education students put on a great Career Fair in the Town Square on Friday, January 19th; they talked to students and staff, showing samples of tools they used on the job with photos highlighting a wide variety of their experiences; some placements included construction worksites, heavy equipment shops, elementary schools, daycare, a town planning office and surveying work;
- Throughout the year, the school partners with Our Lady of Fatima Parish to provide a monthly Community Friendship Meal, free of charge, to anyone in the community. They have about 40 patrons every month. The Food and Nutrition class prepares the food and then delivers it and the school chaplain and some students from the pastoral team serve it. The OLF Catholic Women's League members provide beverages and assist with setup and cleanup at Our Lady of Fatima church hall;
- St. Joseph's second Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser will take place on March 5th in support of their "Matthew 25 Fund" which helps students and families in need;
- On Ash Wednesday, the school community celebrated a Liturgy of the Word in the gym with the distribution of ashes. During the Lenten Season, the school will hold its annual 24-hour Fast in support of charities;
- The school has also re-launched the Improv Teams. They have enough interest to create two teams and the senior team will be competing in the Canadian Improv Games in Ottawa the week after March Break;
- The drama production this year is "The Girl Who Was Asked to Turn Blue", a one-act drama with a comedic flare. There are 13 actors and 5 stagehands. The play will be performed at the National Theatre School Dramafest in Ottawa the week after March Break. They won last year, and if they win again, they will move on to the Eastern Regionals in Gananoque, then to Provincials in Toronto
- St. Joseph's athletics teams have seen great success over the past few months; the winter season saw the girls' volleyball teams, boys' basketball teams, girls' and boys' varsity hockey teams and the ski and snowboard alpine teams compete in the Upper Ottawa Valley Sports Association. Both the junior and senior basketball teams represented the association at the Eastern Ontario Championships and the school had 1 skier and 4 snowboarders who moved on to OFSAA;

- The junior boys' basketball team won the UOVHSSA Championship for the first time and the team will compete in EOSSAA in Russell, Ontario on February 28th;
- St. Joseph's ski days are also a fantastic school activity, offering students a combination of physical exercise, outdoor adventure and skills development. Students attended Calabogie Peaks where they received an orientation session covering basic skiing or snowboarding techniques, safety guidelines and rules. Qualified instructors conduct ski or snowboard lessons for students, focusing on balance, turning and stopping. After the initial lessons, students have opportunities to practice their skills and ski on the various trails;
- Members of the Board's Program Team engaged the Grade 8's with an Experiential Learning Lesson that incorporated coding Micro Bits with an embedded outdoor education component. Students were led through an introduction to coding that enabled them to program one Micro Bit as a radio beacon and a second Micro Bit as a radio receiver. The team then transitioned outdoors and led students in a snowshoe lesson as well as a search and rescue activity using their two Micro Bits. Connections were made to Pathways and Careers as students begin the transition to high school.

Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke

- Students recently participated in an Entrepreneurship Event "Dragon's Den" style, where students had to create their own business and provide a pitch on their great ideas to 'investors'. Students' ideas were very creative and knowledgeable on topics of marketing, investments and entrepreneurship;
- The school was extremely proud to unveil a new mural hanging in their school hallway. Grade 12 student, Abby Jo Knight, completed this project as part of her independent art project in Mr. Bennett's art class. The mural is named "Stars by Name: and is acrylic on wood;
- The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) students have been busy with various activities; in January, Grade 11 and 12 students enrolled in the SHSM Transportation program had the chance to participate in a welding clinic hosted by Robert Fleming, a qualified welder from CNL. He is also a Bishop Smith graduate and it was a special learning experience for students to explore the variety of welding processes currently used in the industry;
- On February 12 & 13, a 2-day meat cutting workshop was offered to senior Indigenous students from both high schools; a total of 14 students participated – 6 from SJHS and 8 from BSCHS. The workshop was provided through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), Skills Ontario and Seaway Valley Meat Cutting School. Students were instructed on safe food handling and basic knife handling skills and were also taught various meat-cutting techniques. They participated in sausage making and tasting, and all students received meat portions to take home, as well as a tool kit for success.

Once again, students travelled to Yamasa, Monte Plata, Dominican Republic from February 9th to the 16th; 4 staff and 11 students participated from both high schools. Throughout the week, the group kept busy painting homes in preparation for concrete entrances that will be poured in the coming weeks. They also helped to clean up the Ozama River, collecting garbage bags of waste. Other highlights included attending Mass at Saint Joseph's Catholic Church in Yamasa and witnessing the baptism of over 40 children. They visited Guillén Brothers to learn about Taino culture and pottery

making. The team also had a tour of the medical clinic in Yamasa, where they had daily reflections related to scripture. Students also had a local woman braid their hair. They were also able to tour the walled city of Santo Domingo, visiting the Monument of the Founding Fathers of the Dominican, the Cathedral of Santa Maria la Menoren, enjoyed lunch at a local pizzeria and visited Boca Chica Beach. The week was an eventful and eye-opening experience and students and staff are always grateful for the Yamasa community, as this would not be possible without the Dominican host families and local Dominican friends, Ana de la Cruz and Wilton Manzueta. The DR team is still holding fundraisers for anyone who is interested in donating. The maple syrup fundraiser is still on and an upcoming candle fundraiser will be held starting this spring. The Board has partnered with J.P. Waxington again and there will be four scents available. All funds raised will go to supporting the needs of the DR Team's friends in Yamasa.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Business and Corporate Services Committee Report

Anne Haley, Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held February 12, 2024.

Community Use of Schools – An updated summary of the Community Use of Schools for 2023-2024 was provided. Discussion took place on the fee schedule and this item will be added to the next meeting.

Information (Confidential) Policy – Heidi Fraser reported that this policy has been updated given the fact that last month there was a security breach. The policy has been reviewed to ensure it is up-to-date and current.

RESOLUTION #6

Moved by Pat O'Grady
 Seconded by Bob Schreader
 That the Board approve the revisions made to the Information (Confidential) policy documents, as presented.

...Carried

Third Party Advertisements – Mark Searson advised that administration made a procedural change earlier this year regarding the distribution of flyers in schools by various community groups. The decision was made to no longer allow any advertising by third party groups through our local schools. OSBIE has advised that the perception of parents may be that the Board is endorsing these requests and potential liability issues may arise.

At the Board Meeting, Mark informed the trustees that a concern was received from a citizen in Douglas, expressing their disappointment that the Board was not allowing advertising for the Admaston-Bromley Library activities on the school's electronic sign. Mark said that administration had a chance to review the library agreement today. He noted that there is a clause in the agreement that the library board is required to have

liability insurance in the amount of \$5,000,000. Administration will approach the Admaston-Bromley Library Board to see if they are agreeable to adding another clause indicating that if they bring in volunteers, that they are responsible to ensure that they have criminal background checks. An update will be brought back to the committee once we have heard back from them.

Bob Schreder responded that we have a lot of groups who use our schools for piano, dance, etc. and do we ensure that they all have CRCs. Mark replied that these are organizations who utilize our schools through community use of schools. We do not advertise for them and we are not responsible for ensuring they have criminal record checks.

Dave Howard added that our small schools are the hub of the community and it's good to keep the communities involved but we do have to protect ourselves.

Educational Services Committee Meeting Report

Committee Chair, Pat O'Grady, reported on the meeting held February 12, 2024.

Presentation – The 2023-2024 Math Achievement and Action Plan – Derek Lennox, Superintendent of Education, presented the plan, advising that we have three priority actions:

Priority Action 1 – Ensuring fidelity of curriculum implementation and use of instructional and assessment practices with a proven track record of enhancing student achievement;

Priority Action 2 – Engaging in ongoing learning to strengthen mathematics content knowledge for teaching;

Priority Action 3 – Knowing the mathematics learner, and ensuring mathematical tasks, interventions and supports are relevant and responsive.

Through various board, school and classroom strategies the administrative staff, principals and teachers will implement these strategies.

January Mental Health Newsletter – The newsletter was provided as an information item.

February Mental Health Newsletter – The newsletter was provided as an information item.

Mental Health-Educator Pathways – This was an information item.

Mental Health – Tier 1 Strategies – This was an information item.

Kindness Project Secondary – This was provided as an information item.

Kindness Project Elementary – This was provided as an information item.

EOCCC Mid-Year Retreat – The venue for the mid-year retreat will be Glen House located in Landsdowne, Ontario, as the Galilee Centre in Arnprior is no longer available. Because of the change in venue, the number of participants had to be reduced and so, along with David Afelskie, the Board will have 3 teachers and 1 ECE participating.

OCSTA – Communication Materials Related to Secondary Catholic Online Learning – This was an information item.

Future Updates to Kindergarten Curriculum – This document highlighted some of the forthcoming changes to the kindergarten curriculum.

Future Updates to the Ontario Curriculum – This document highlights some key curriculum areas.

Request for Out-of-Country School Trip

A request was received from April Laabs, a teacher at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, to take students to Greece in March 2025.

RESOLUTION #7

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Bob Schreader

That the Board approve the request from April Laabs, Teacher at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, to take students to Greece in March 2025, provided that all plans are made in accordance with Board policy and with the understanding that the Board reserves the option to cancel any trip that will take place in regions of heightened security or health risks.

...Carried

Secondary School Report

Elena Valliquette, Student Trustee, reported on activities taking place at St. Joseph's High School in Renfrew.

Student Council

- Student Council made and sold customized cookies for students to buy for Valentine's Day
- February 29th is Grade 8 Orientation, introducing all grade 8's to St. Joseph's High School and high school life

Athletics

- The ski team participated in UOVHSAA, as well as EOSSAA and a Grade 11 girl placed first in both races. She will represent SJHS at OFSAA at the end of the month
- Both the junior and senior boys' basketball teams are going to EOSSAA

Pastoral

- Students left for the Dominican Republic on Friday, February 9th and returned on the 16th
- An Ash Wednesday Mass was held in the gym on February 14th
- Pancakes were served for Shrove Tuesday

Arts

- The play practice has begun for *The Girl Who Was Asked to Turn Blue*

OCSTA Items

- Memo – 2024 OCSTA Awards
- Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2024
- Future Updates to Ontario Curriculum
- ON News Release – Ontario Introducing Mandatory Black History Learning
- Catholic Teachers for Remote Indigenous Communities
- On the Road Together – Leaders as Healers
- CCCB Journey Through Lent Video Series Weekly Reflections for Lenten Season
- On the Road Together – Ash Wednesday and the First Sunday of Lent
- Updates to Bill 124 – BLG
- CCSTA 2024 AGM & Convention
- Canadian Churches and Christian Leaders Call for Peace as War in Ukraine Enters Third Year
- 2024 Catholic Education Week – Resource Kit Materials

CORRESPONDENCEFEB7 – Staff Source

- February 8 - card of thanks from the Yutronkie family for the Board's expression of sympathy sent at the passing of Anna Mae Cybulski.

FUTURE BUSINESSGeneral/Trustees' Comments

Pat O'Grady asked for clarification about a pending increase for bus drivers. Mary Lynn replied it is up to operators what they pay their drivers but there is a recruitment and retention bonus that is distributed to drivers separately. The consortiums flow the funds to the operators, who in turn distribute the money to their drivers. The operators are to provide information to the consortium as to who is qualified for the bonus.

Bob Schreder commented that Our Lady of Lourdes Parish recently held a chili-fest and this year they put out a donation box to raise money for the Dominican Republic Experience. They raised approximately \$240 for the cause.

Bob reported that in February 1984, Andy Bray started as a trustee with the Board, making this month, his 40th year of service as a trustee. He said that the Board will make a formal presentation to Andy later this year but wanted to extend the Board's congratulations to him on this accomplishment.

Meeting Dates

- March 4 - Business & Corporate Services Committee Meeting
4:00 p.m. – Board Office
- March 4 - Educational Services Committee Meeting
following BCS Meeting – Board Office
- March 6 - Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m. – Board Office
- March 25 - Board Meeting - Committee of the Whole – 4:00 p.m.
- General Meeting – 4:45 p.m.

RESOLUTION #8

Moved by Andy Bray

Seconded by Anne Haley

That the recommendations made by motion and consensus in the Committee of the Whole meeting of February 26, 2024 be approved.

...Carried

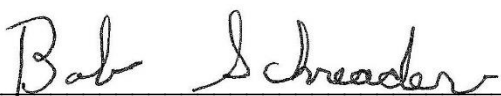
RESOLUTION #9

Moved by Pat O'Grady

Seconded by Bob Schreader

That the meeting be adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

...Carried



Chairperson, Renfrew County Catholic
District School Board



Director of Education and Secretary, Renfrew
County Catholic District School Board