

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, January 29, 2024 at 4:45 p.m.

Bob Schreader, Chair of the Board, opened the meeting with a prayer. He asked that the following people be remembered in our prayers: Patrick St. Michael (father of Dan St. Michael, Teacher at St. Joseph’s High School, Renfrew), Fr. Patrick Fitzpatrick (former OCSTA Chaplain), Jean-Paul Lariviere (father of Mandy Cotnam, Teacher at St. Francis of Assisi School, Petawawa), Gerald Perry (retired Teacher with the Board and father of retired Director of Education, Jaimie Perry), Annie Mae Cybulski (mother of Drenda Yutronkie, EA at Bishop Smith Catholic High School and grandmother of Jason Yutronkie, Teacher at Bishop Smith CHS, Tanya Herron, EA at Bishop Smith CHS and Lisa Coulas, Financial analyst at the Board Office), Earl Anderson Sr. (father-in-law of Crystal McLean, itinerant caretaker), Nick Vandergragt (father of Michaela Vandergragt, former student trustee with the Board) and Maisie Gleason (retired RCCDSB teacher).

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

RESOLUTION #1

Moved by Bob Schreader
Seconded by Pat O’Grady
That Trustees move into In-Camera Committee in Committee of the Whole.
...Carried

RESOLUTION #2

Moved by Bob Schreader
Seconded by Anne Haley
That Trustees move out of In-Camera Committee in Committee of the Whole.
...Carried

ROLL CALL

- | | | |
|----------|--|---|
| Present: | Chairperson | - Bob Schreader |
| | Vice Chairperson | - David Howard |
| | Trustees | - Andy Bray
- Susan Artymko
- Anne Haley
- 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 (via phone) |
| | 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 Anne Haley
 Seconded by David Howard
 That the Agenda for the January 29, 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 Pat O'Grady
 Seconded by Andy Bray
 That the Minutes of the General Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board held in the Board Room on Monday, November 27, 2023 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

DISBURSEMENT LIST**RESOLUTION #5**

Moved by David Howard
 Seconded by Pat O'Grady
 That the listing of payments as shown on JAN2 and JAN2A be approved as presented.

...Carried

BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES**2022-2023 Audited Financial Statements**

The 2022-2023 Audited Financial Statements were presented to the Board for approval.

RESOLUTION #6

Moved by Susan Artymko
 Seconded by Anne Haley
 That the Board approve the 2022-2023 Consolidated Financial Statements as presented.

...Carried

PRESENTATION

Communications Analytics Review

Kylie Gibson, the Board's Communications Officer, attended the meeting to provide an overview of RCCDSB communications. She explained that on our social media channels we have the option to set goals for engagement and reach. Current goals are to increase the Board's Facebook and Instagram reach during our kindergarten registration period and Kyle was happy to report that we have almost achieved our goal in just one week. She also reviewed search traffic on Facebook and Instagram over the last month, including top search queries for our site, top content and visitor and follower demographics.

Kylie highlighted some of the accomplishments over the last year, which include assisting with the preparation of the Director's Annual Report, redesign of the Board's Good News media releases, redesign of job posting graphics, promotion of the Board's Alpha initiative, collaborating with French public, Catholic, and the English public board along with the OPP and local police services on Communications Protocols. She has worked on various advertising campaigns, kindergarten registration and sponsorships, focusing on using social media to highlight certain events. She has also assisted with the Student Census and continued to increase our website audience.

Further plans include increasing our social media engagement, continued marketing campaigns for kindergarten registration, more video content creation and continued promotion of SHSM, curriculum and student life in RCCDSB's faith-filled environment. Additional plans also include meeting with community partners to establish a strategy for crisis communications.

In conclusion, Kylie reviewed her communications strategy which includes visiting a school once a week, creating a schedule of schools to visit throughout the year and to plan these visits in accordance with the monthly Good News releases; continue with at least three social media posts a week and monitoring of analytics; update the website and link new pages to social media; post jobs with different graphics and measure their performance. She also continues to attend school events such as the recent SHSM construction site tour, Treaties Week presentations and Wheelchair Basketball. She also will continue with staff appreciation posts, celebrating various staff with a small write-up of why they choose to work in their profession.

Dave Howard thanked Kylie and mentioned the short video contest that OCSTA holds every year. He thought that it would be wonderful if our Board submitted a video and that with Kylie's help we would be able to create something special.

Bob Schreader thanked Kylie too on behalf of the Board. He said she is doing an excellent job and has made a wonderful difference in our social media presence. All of the news items about our schools are of great value and he is really pleased with the results.

NEW BUSINESS

Retirements

RESOLUTION #7

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Andy Bray

That the Board accept the following retirements with regret:

- Heather Hickson, Teacher at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, effective January 31, 2024;
- Louise Neville, Educational Assistant at St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew, effective January 31, 2024;
- Gerard Afelskie, Caretaker at St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew, effective June 27, 2024 and
- Peter Gleason, Teacher at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, effective February 29, 2024.

...Carried

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

Chalk River/Deep River/Petawawa Schools

Dave Howard, local Trustee, reported on activities taking place at the Board's Chalk River, Deep River and Petawawa schools.

St. Mary's OLGC, Deep River

- The school-wide Mass was recently held at Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish; during Advent, the school also held their weekly Advent Prayer Services to pray together as a whole school
- Virtue of the Month assemblies are held, where students in each class that demonstrate the virtue of that month are recognized. December's virtue was Charity and January's virtue is Courage. These awards and assemblies encourage students to continue acting as Jesus would and to follow the virtues;
- An Advent Food Drive led by student council was held and all donations went to the local food bank.
- Just before Christmas, St. Mary's students performed their Christmas Concert, had a Christmas Spirit Week and a school wide game of bingo led by student council. The school had a Christmas Poinsettia fundraiser to raise money for the new school jerseys. A door decorating contest was also held to see which classroom had the most creative ideas;
- Choir, art club and Lego club are all in full swing and students thoroughly enjoy these groups, which provide an opportunity for them to meet people who have similar interests and is a great way to make new friends.

St. Anthony's, Chalk River

- The school put on a fantastic Christmas concert at the Chalk River Lions Club in the days leading up to the Christmas break.
- Local members of the Catholic Women's League treated the entire school to a Christmas luncheon on December 19th;
- With the many new staff at St. Anthony's, the school recently had a fresh "Knights" logo created. The staff and students are excited to show off their new St. Anthony's gear with the redesigned logo;
- Buses were cancelled on the last Friday in January due to weather and St. Anthony's students joined St. Mary's virtually to watch a concert featuring the duo "Joyride". Staff and students enjoyed the highly entertaining performance before technical issues prevented the virtual concert from continuing. Students were still very excited to watch some of the performance!

Our Lady of Sorrows, Petawawa

- December was a bustling and festive month and the focus the school community had on charitable initiatives and community involvement was heartwarming;
- The school donated 29 boxes to Operation Christmas and the Grade 6 class's food drive for Petawawa Pantry demonstrates a commitment to helping those in need;
- The Advent Angels campaign, with cash donations for the purchase of angel ornaments added an extra layer of generosity and support for the local community;
- The Scholastic Book Fair organized by the school council provided an exciting opportunity for students and staff to explore and purchase new books, promoting a love for reading among the school community;
- Culminating the month was a Christmas Concert, a fantastic way to bring joy and celebrate the season;

St. Francis of Assisi, Petawawa

- The school celebrated Advent with weekly prayer services every Friday with students actively participating in the preparation for each week;
- Staff and students were invited by Father John to gather at St. Francis of Assisi Parish for Christmas Mass and the school is grateful to have a rich school-parish connection this year
- Students from every class also put on a wonderful Christmas concert with performances in French and English;
- The Empower reading program and reading buddies are used to help students improve their reading skills and to share learning with others
- Kindergarten students have been working hard on their winter inquiry into the snow cycle and were excited to share their learning with others
- The Extended French teachers have been hard at work collaborating on improving French language program delivery; students enrolled in extended French receive an extra 40 minutes of French instruction every day.

Across the county, students were grateful to receive RCCDSB toques to help keep them warm this winter.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Business and Corporate Services Committee Report

Dave Howard, Acting Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held January 8, 2024.

Community Use of Schools – The Plant Department provided an updated summary of the Community Use of Schools for the 2023-2024 school year. A new column has been added to the spreadsheet to indicate new permits.

Cyber Protection Policy – Chris Blackstock, Manager of Technology and Security Services, reviewed the draft cyber security plan policy. A cyber protection plan is needed to safeguard sensitive information, maintain the integrity of educational systems, and ensure the overall security of digital infrastructure. With the increasing reliance on technology in educational settings, schools store vast amounts of student and staff data, including personal information and academic records. A cyber protection plan helps prevent unauthorized access, data breaches and cyberattacks that could compromise this sensitive information. Educational institutions also heavily depend on digital platforms and networks for administrative tasks, communication and instructional purposes. A cyber protection plan is essential to mitigate the risks of disruptions such as ransomware attacks, that could disrupt the normal functioning of schools, leading to potential data loss and financial consequences. The potential impact on student learning and safety cannot be understated and a well-designed cyber protection plan helps ensure the continuity of online learning platforms, secure communication channels and the overall safety of students who increasingly engage with digital resources.

RESOLUTION #8

Moved by Susan Artymko

Seconded by Pat O’Grady

That the Board approve the Cyber Protection Policy as presented.

...Carried

Support the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023 – This Act, which received Royal Assent on June 8, 2023, includes the collaboration of school boards with municipalities to plan for the early and integrated development of school sites to meet current and future needs of the boards, aligned with the proposed Provincial Policy Statement. To further support the changes to maximize school board capital assets enabled by the legislation, additional provisions will be proclaimed and a new regulation will become effective December 31, 2023.

Educational Services Committee Meeting Report

Committee Chair, Pat O’Grady, reported on the meeting held January 8, 2024.

PINK Week Resources – This was an information item.

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

2024-2024 School Year Calendar Approval – The draft calendar was presented, developed by the Calendar Committee, showing PA Day placements and board holidays that meet Ministry mandates for the 2024-2025 school year.

RESOLUTION #9

Moved by David Howard

Seconded by Susan Artymko

That the Board approve the school year calendar for the 2024-2025 school year.

...Carried

Movement of April 2024 PA Day – Heidi Fraser updated the Committee on the movement of the April 2024 PA Day because of the solar eclipse happening on that day. The request for the change has gone to the Ministry of Education for approval.

Family Life Education Curriculum- The curriculum for the new Fully Alive program will be commencing in September 2024, starting with Grade 1 and updating one grade per year.

Indigenous Education Update – Prior to the Christmas Break, Derek Lennox met with Shelley Wilcox, the Education Manager for the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan. We are now on a more productive path and a future meeting between the Board and the Council has been tabled.

St. Joseph's High School Reconfiguration Recommendation – Heidi Fraser provided an update on the meetings that were held with parents in the Renfrew/Arnprior areas to discuss the reconfiguration of St. Joseph's High School to a Grade 7-12 school. Due to a very low parent turnout at the meetings, along with a low number of responses to the survey, the Committee agreed to table the motion to recommend the reconfiguration at this time. An update will be given at the April 2024 ESC meeting.

Additional Supports for PA Days Devoted to Provincial Education Priorities 2023-2024 – This was an information item.

Curriculum Updates for Implementation in September 2024 – The Ministry of Education has announced that the cohort starting Grade 9 in September 2024 will have to complete a compulsory tech course in Grade 9 or 10. No other information has been provided by the Ministry at this time. The Committee will be kept up to date as information is received.

EQAO Updates – This was an information item on EQAO updates from December 2023.

Special Education Advisory Committee Report

Committee Chair, Susan Artymko, reported on the meeting held January 17, 2024.

Presentation – Martin Smit, Educational Consultant for LDAO – Clint Young welcomed Martin Smit to the meeting. It was explained that the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) is a registered charity dedicated to improving the lives of children, youth and adults with learning disabilities. LDAO offers many resources, services, information, venues, and products designed to help people with LDs and ADHD, as well as parents, teachers and other professionals. LD@school is a project of the LDAO and includes a website as well as the Educators' Institute (summer conference). It provides Ontario educators with information, resources and research related to teaching students with learning disabilities. The LD@school website features resources and professional development material in a variety of formats. It highlights evidence-based, evidence-informed and practice-informed approaches, practices and strategies that can be put directly to use in the classroom. As well, the LD@home website was created to help bring resources to Ontario households impacted by learning disabilities. LD@home provides resources to families and a safe place to connect with LDA networks across Ontario.

February 2, 2024 PA Day Plans – The Educational Assistants are gathering together on this day at St. Joseph's High School. There will be four workshop sessions for them to take part in and all new EAs will receive BMS training.

Special Education Benchmarking Across Eastern Ontario – Our Regional Internal Audit Team (RIAT) is working on the EA allocation system. They will be gathering data from other Eastern Ontario school boards, which will provide an opportunity to share and collaborate with these boards.

OCSTA Message – MACSE & Feedback – The MACSE feedback form requested by the Ministry was discussed at the October SEAC meeting. Clint Young completed the form and it was submitted before the October 20th deadline. This form has now been sent out again and the Ministry is asking for more details. Mr. Young asked members if they had anything they wanted included on the form to please let him know. The new deadline is February 12, 2024.

Ministry Response – In September we received a copy of a letter from the Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB that they had sent to the Minister of Education regarding staffing of Educational Assistants. Our SEAC committee decided to send a letter as well. We just received a response back from the Acting Director of Special Education, which is a good sign as the Ministry must be receiving a lot of feedback from other boards. The hope now is that they will respond with something other than a letter.

CDSBEO – Special Education Plan – We have compared our plan to the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario's plan. Committee members are asked to let Mr. Young or Donna McEwen know if they have any suggestions for our plan.

Association Reports – There were no Association reports.

Next Meeting Date – The February meeting has been cancelled. The next meeting will be March 6, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Secondary School Report

Ben Wood, Student Trustee, reported on activities taking place at Bishop Smith Catholic High School in Pembroke.

Student Council

- Work Uniform Day was held on January 17th
- Pajama Day was scheduled for January 25th but it did not take place because it was a snow day
- The exam moratorium began

Athletics

- The senior girls' volleyball team travelled to Kingston and won the B championship
- The senior boys' basketball team holds a 7-0 no loss record
- The junior boys' basketball team holds a 1-4 record
- On January 17th, the girls' hockey team competed in a tournament in Petawawa and they won every game
- The boys' hockey team competed in a tournament in Eganville on January 15th

Arts

- The Drama Department put on "The Rise of Robinhood" on January 18th and 19th at Streetlight Theatre and both shows were very quickly sold out

Pastoral

- Former Indigenous NHL player John Chabot visited the school to give guidance to students on careers and their personal faith journeys. He later went on the ice to practice with the students in our hockey program

Academics

- Exams were to begin on Friday, January 26th but because Friday was a snow day, they began on Monday, January 29th; the Grade 9 students also completed their EQAO math testing

OCSTA Information Items

Bob Schreder brought the trustees' attention to a number of the items from OCSTA.

- a. Release Template on Evangelization of Young People in Canada Today
- b. ON News Release – Ontario to Make Holodomar Education Mandatory for High School Students
- c. On the Road Together – Discerning Leadership – Jesus Style of Authority – Power for Service
- d. Memo – Catholic Secondary Online Course Offerings for 2024-2025
- e. On the Road Together Reflection – The Day and Hour Unknown
- f. Financial Accountability Office of Ontario – School Board Funding Report
- g. ON News Release – Ontario Helping More Students Kick-Start Careers in the Trades
- h. On the Road Together – Leading with Light

- i. Supporting National Catholic Health Care Week in Canada – it was suggested that the Board communicate this through our social media
- j. Archbishop Francis Leo's Pastoral Letter – Seeking the Kingdom of God & Beyond All Other Things
- k. ON News Release – Ontario Connecting More Youth to Mental Health Services in Algoma District
- l. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2024
- m. Submission Letter to MOE – Director Performance Regulations Bill 98
- n. Seminar for CDSB Indigenous Leads – June 5-6
- o. OCSTA's 2024 Pre-Budget Submission
- p. OCSTA Short Video Contest Winners
- q. On the Road Together Reflection – Leaders Create Conditions for People to Realize their Callings & Potential
- r. Release of Catholic Secondary Online Courses
- s. ON News Release – Ontario Unveils a Back to Basics Kindergarten Curriculum
- t. Pastoral Letter on the Use of Social Media – Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

CORRESPONDENCE

1. December 2023 - Christmas cards/greetings received from:
 - Toronto Catholic District School Board
 - Bishop Guy Desrochers, Archbishop of Moncton
 - Pembroke Fire Department
 - Future Design School
 - Renfrew County District School Board
 - Pembroke Regional Hospital
 - OECTA Renfrew County Unit Executive
 - Catholic Education Foundation of Ontario
 - York Catholic District School Board
 - Waterloo Catholic District School Board
 - Jeannie Ivory, PIC Chair
 - Peterborough Victoria Northumberland & Clarington CDSB
 - Anne Jamieson, Executive Director, ICE
 - COPE Local 103
 - Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario
 - Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association
 - Canadian Military Family Magazine
 - Historica Canada
 - Marie-Christine Lemenchick, Manager, East Region
Ministry of Education
 - Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic District School Board
 - EdCan Network
 - Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium
 - Labine Printers
 - Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
 - CPCO (Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario)
 - MASC (Multicultural Arts for Schools & Communities)

FUTURE BUSINESS

General/Trustees' Comments

The trustees who attended the recent OCSTA Trustees' Seminar reported that they enjoyed the presentations and that the seminar was very worthwhile. The presentations are all available online for those who were not able to attend.

Meeting Dates

- February 12 - Business & Corporate Services Committee Meeting
4:00 p.m. – Board Office
- February 12 - Educational Services Committee Meeting
following BCS Meeting – Board Office
- February 26 - Board Meeting - Committee of the Whole – 4:00 p.m.
- General Meeting – 4:45 p.m.

RESOLUTION #10

Moved by David Howard
Seconded by Jerry Lavalley

That the recommendations made by motion and consensus in the Committee of the Whole meeting of January 29, 2024 be approved.

...Carried

RESOLUTION #11

Moved by Anne Haley
Seconded by Andy Bray
That the meeting be adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

...Carried



Chairperson, Renfrew County Catholic
District School Board



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