

RENFREW COUNTY CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of the General Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Held in the Library at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, on Monday, June 24, 2024 at 4:45 p.m.

Bob Schreader, Chair of the Board, opened the meeting with a prayer and acknowledged 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 Pat O’Grady
Seconded by Bob Schreader
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	- Susan Artymko - Andy Bray - Jerry Lavalley - Pat O’Grady
	Student Representative	- Elena Valliquette - Ben Wood - James Russett
	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
Regrets:	Trustee	- Anne Haley

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION #3

Moved by David Howard
 Seconded by Pat O'Grady
 That the Agenda for the June 24, 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 Susan Artymko
 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, May 27, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

DISBURSEMENT LIST

RESOLUTION #5

Moved by Jerry Lavalley
 Seconded by Pat O'Grady
 That the listing of payments as shown on JUN2 be approved as presented.

...Carried

PRESENTATION

2024-2025 Board Budget

Board Chair, Bob Schreader, presented the 2024-2025 Budget for the trustees' approval. This budget of \$93.1 million focuses on student readiness, mental health, math and literacy supports, special education and faith. The budget aligns with the goals of the RCCDSB by enhancing opportunities for all students and promotes the theme of the 2024-2025 school year: *as a community of believers, we strive to foster student ability to think critically, communicate effectively and work collaboratively.*

Budget highlights include investments for Early Reading Interventions, the Board Math Action Plan, Special Education resources, the skilled trades, school condition improvements, health resource training for staff, including support for anti-sex trafficking, vaping, bullying and cannabis use. The Board will also continue its investment in diversity, equity and accessibility and will undertake an Equity Audit during the 2024-2025 school year. Mental Health and Wellness also remains a priority and funds have been allocated to continue to support students. Social Workers and School and Attendance Counsellors will continue to work daily with students in areas of anxiety, social skills, self-regulation and disengagement.

The Board has also invested in literacy and reading enhancement supports, including the Acadience Reading Screening Tool, with the devices to support its implementation within the Kindergarten to Grade 2 classes. The Board has hired three literacy intervention specialist teachers who will provide support to kindergarten to grade 3 classrooms in literacy and reading.

The RCCDSB also recognizes the importance of the skilled trades, pathways and experiential learning. The Board has received money for the skilled trades, the entrepreneurship education pilot project and experiential learning for guidance teachers. The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program has remained a budget priority with funds invested for this coming school year and the Board has also allocated funds for the Specialist High Skills Major Program (SHSM).

Another priority is enhancing Catholic faith, and the Board has allocated funds to sponsor teachers who would like to complete their religious education qualification, continuing a focus on Adult Faith Formation.

In conclusion, Mr. Schreader thanked the members of the budget team for the time and expertise they provided to prepare a balanced budget that ensures our students will continue to learn, achieve their best and grow closer to Christ. He asked that the budget be approved as submitted.

RESOLUTION #6

Moved by David Howard

Seconded by Pat O'Grady

That the Board approve the 2024-2025 Budget, as presented.

...Carried

A media release outlining further details of the budget will be distributed following the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Retirements

RESOLUTION #7

Moved by Susan Artymko

Seconded by Andy Bray

That the Board approve the following retirements with regret:

- Vickie Anderson, Teacher, Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, effective June 30, 2024; and
- Maureen Bellamy, Custodian, St. Francis of Assisi School, Petawawa, effective August 30, 2024.

...Carried

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Business and Corporate Services Committee Report

In Anne Haley's absence, Pat O'Grady reported on the meeting held June 17, 2024.

Policy – Staffing – School Secretaries – Mary Lynn Schauer updated the Committee on some changes that have been made to the Staffing – School Secretaries policy. The base hours per day in elementary schools were increased from 2.8 hours per day to 3.5 hours for 1-25 pupil schools; the Board having the right to allocate additional hours to small schools subject to funding; flex hours per year based on enrolment; and an increase from 3 additional days up to 5 additional days to be used first at the end of the current school year and any balance to be taken prior to the start of the following school year. In secondary schools, there was an increase of the 0.5 FTE 10-month school secretary at BSCHS to 1.0 FTE; an increase of up to 5 additional days from 3 for ten-month school secretaries and up to five additional days to be used first at the end of the current school year and any balance prior to the start of the following school year.

RESOLUTION #8

Moved by Pat O'Grady

Seconded by Jerry Lavalley

That the Board approve the revisions made to the Staffing – School Secretaries Policy, as presented.

...Carried

Community Use of Schools – An updated summary of the community use of schools from September 2023 to August 31, 2024 was provided as an information item.

Educational Services Committee Meeting Report

Committee Chair, Pat O’Grady, reported on the meeting held June 17, 2024.

Presentation – Math Action Plan Update – Elizabeth Addicott, the Board’s Numeracy Lead Special Assignment Teacher, attended the meeting to update the committee on the Board’s 2023-2024 Math Achievement Action Plan. She has worked extensively with the four schools that were chosen by the Ministry of Education for this year – George Vanier, Combermere; St. James, Eganville; St. Anthony’s, Chalk River and St. Mary’s, Deep River, working with Grade 3’s at George Vanier and Grade 6’s at the other schools. The focus is to implement the three priority actions that were set out by the Ministry of Education at the beginning of the school year. Elizabeth generally spends two weeks at a time at each of the four schools in order to provide consistency. Her role as Math Facilitator involves co-planning, teaching and assessing; diagnostic assessments to help inform instructional planning and interventions; the implementation of guided flexible groupings during math instruction, tiered interventions based on student progress and needs and continued use of evidence-based resources and board-provided support. Elizabeth also continues to work with the special education team with Tier 1 programming to try and remove barriers to help students achieve in math, uses shared templates to improve the process for data recording, works with students to help them understand a deeper variety of concepts, provides professional development opportunities for teachers, along with aligning core documents and effective practices.

PPM170 – School Board Communication with Parents – A memo was received from the Minister of Education, advising that the Ministry is moving forward with further policy reforms to support student achievement and well-being and increase transparency for parents and families. PPM170 outlines requirements and provides direction to school boards on communication with parents to strengthen service standards and ensure consistent and reliable information is made available to parents across the province. Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, school boards will be required to provide parents with information to support their active engagement in their child’s education and to develop and comply with a protocol setting out standards for acknowledging and responding to parent inquiries. Not a lot will change from our board’s current practices; the Ministry has created a new website for parents which we are already sharing, and we already have a process for complaints. The complaint process outlined in PPM170 will be formalized into our current complaint policy.

Modernizing Ontario Secondary School Diploma Requirements and Other Supports for Student Success – The Ontario Secondary School Diploma requirements are being modernized to ensure that students have the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their chosen pathways and continue to build a skilled workforce that strengthens Ontario’s economy and furthers its global competitive advantage. Changes include:

- Introduction of a new financial literacy graduation requirement
- Consulting on the life skills students need for future success
- Ensuring all new teachers hold basic competency in math, with the requirement that teacher applicants to the Ontario College of Teachers must pass the Math Proficiency Test beginning in 2025

- Revitalization of guidance and career education to support students' understanding of local labour market needs and pathways to good careers
- Up to \$14 million in new funding in 2024-25 to launch new career coaching services for Grade 9 and 10 students to explore high demand jobs, including in STEM and skilled trades
- Return of ministry-provided questions for Grade 8 and 12 student exit surveys to gather feedback from students on the supports that have worked for them at key transition points in their educational journey, with an emphasis on guidance services; providing students with more flexibility in the courses they select to graduate, while maintaining a focus on STEM-related skills.

The number of compulsory course groups are being reduced from three to one; students will now be required to earn 17 compulsory courses and 13 optional courses to obtain their OSSD.

Updates to Technological Information – This was an information item advising that enrolment is now open for Fresh From the Farm, an initiative that supports both school communities and Ontario farmers.

Special Education Advisory Committee Report

Committee Chair, Susan Artymko, reported on the meeting held June 5, 2024.

Presentation: Special Education – A Year in Review – Karen Keels and Kelly Etmanskie attended the meeting to update the committee on highlights of the 2023-2024 year and plans for the 2024-2025 school year. Karen Keels is the new Principal of Student Success and Support and will be assisting the special education and mental health team. She is also the Principal of the summer school special education program.

Kelly Etmanskie provided updates on:

- SESH – Special Education Support Hours – which are bi-weekly or monthly virtual meetings, which provide information on LD @ School – how language disorder definitions are changing and how to support our students; the Science of Reading Part 4 – how we can support our students in learning to read; Learner Profiles – digging deep into the students of mystery so that the school can find out what is working and what isn't; Student Safety Plan – revised to better reflect ministry language and guidelines; Student Behaviour Plan – a focus group was developed to provide a behaviour plan template; Dr. Demark Consults – provides psycho-educational reports for our students; Accessibility Training – Rick Hansen training was made available to support our students; EA PA Days – we have developed different themes throughout the year for our EA's in response to the EA audit/survey; August Welcome & Transition Programs – Karen Keels will spearhead this for the upcoming school year
- Revised EA Handbook – a user-friendly guide that EAs can use to navigate their work in our system

Karen Keels then spoke about plans for the 2024-2025 school year:

- Survey – in recognition of the fact that our school teams and principals have very diverse schools, we will be engaging in discussion with our principals on specific needs in their schools
- SERT Day – our SERT's will all be meeting in September for professional learning, and new SERT's can connect with those more experienced
- More SESH's – will be looking at different ways of coping for students who are struggling. The SERT-led SESH's will share best practices and look for new opportunities to help our school teams have a greater understanding of executive functioning. Will also build on Tier 1 strategies and how to support our SERT's
- Reimagining Day Treatment – in the early stages of how this can be reimagined for our students
- Targeted PD for EAs – we will be looking at more ways to support our EAs

Special Education Report Approval – This item was tabled. Some updates will be made to the report and it will be sent out by email the week of June 17th to SEAC members for approval so it can be approved by the Board at the June 24th Board Meeting. Once the Board has approved it, it will be forwarded to the Ministry.

Letter to Minister of Education – A lot of good ideas and information have been put forward by the Committee regarding the letter being sent to the Minister of Education regarding outdated language. Dr. Jenny Demark, our contracted psychologist, will attend the September or October SEAC meeting to give us her professional guidance.

EA Allotment – Mr. Young has met with all school administrators to discuss their EA numbers for the 2024-2025 school year.

Thank You's – Mr. Young thanked the members for the time, care and attention they have given to the committee. The Board greatly values their input and feedback. A small token of thanks was sent out to all members.

Association Reports – No reports were submitted.

Next Meeting Date – The next meeting date is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Young spoke about how the meetings are held virtually and that the Ministry of Education has reminded school boards that meetings should be in person. However, due to the geography of the Board, leniency would probably be given to us. A hybrid version can also be held, with some members coming to the Board Office and others remaining virtual. He asked members to consider this over the summer and it can be discussed again in the new school year.

Special Education Report – Following the meeting, the updated report was sent electronically to the Committee and it was approved by the members.

RESOLUTION #9

Moved by Susan Artymko

Seconded by Pat O’Grady

That the Board approve the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board’s Special Education Board Plan for the school year 2023-2024.

...Carried

Secondary School Report – St. Joseph’s High School

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

Student Council

- The Athletic Banquet was held on June 6th at SJHS and many students won athletic, music and student council awards
- Student Council organized a “where will you be next year” day that was held on June 19th; many students wore their university and college sweaters
- Student Council has been selling freezies on Fridays for the month of June to count down the days till summer

Athletics

- A student (Elena Valliquette) attended OFSAA in Toronto to compete in the girls’ tennis championships on June 3rd

Pastoral

- A community friendship meal was held at Fatima by the Catholic Women’s League
- The SJHS Graduation Mass was held at St. Francis Xavier Church on June 18th for all Grade 12’s and their families

Other

- For the past two weeks, students have been studying hard in preparation for exams on June 20-25
- The Grade 12 graduation will be held on June 27th

OCSTA Information Items

Bob Schreader brought a number of the information items received from OCSTA to the trustees’ attention:

- a. Memo – Theme Announcement – CEW 2025
- b. Appointment of Director of Labour Relations & New OCSTA Address
- c. Cybersecurity Legislation
- d. Package – Application to Co-Host 2026 AGM & Conference

- e. Celebrating National Indigenous History Month
- f. Memo – New Cabinet June 6, 2024
- g. OCSTA – New Address
- h. Minister’s Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) Feedback
- i. Memo – Summer Update
- j. Memo – 2024 Fall Regional Meetings Registration Information – our region’s meeting will be held on September 19th in Ottawa. Trustees who wish to attend are to advise Nancy Levasseur so she can register them for the meeting.

FUTURE BUSINESS

General/Trustee Comments

Dave Howard acknowledged Mary Lynn and her team for the excellent work they did in preparing the 2024-2025 Budget.

Bob Schreader said he attended the Options Skilled Trades Career Fair at the Pembroke Memorial Centre on May 29th and he congratulated everyone involved for putting on such a great event.

Pat O’Grady noted that money being raised through a fundraiser being held at St. James School, is being matched dollar for dollar by a community member.

Bob Schreader reported that the Pembroke Council of the Knights of Columbus is again donating \$3,000 towards school bursaries. In addition, they are donating \$250 to thirteen local Catholic schools for their breakfast programs.

Student Trustee Acknowledgement

Bob Schreader acknowledged Elena Valliquette as she finishes her two-year term as student trustee representing St. Joseph’s High School in Renfrew. The trustees appreciated Elena’s school reports, insights into students’ opinions, student issues pertinent to student engagement and academic achievement. Mr. Schreader presented Elena with a token of appreciation from the Board and wished her much success in her post-secondary education.

James Russett, who will be representing SJHS for the next two years, was also welcomed to the Board.

Trustee Tribute

Bob Schreader recognized Andy Bray who is retiring after forty years as trustee, representing the Town of Arnprior, the Township of McNab/Braeside and the Township of Greater Madawaska. Mr. Bray was appointed on February 6, 1984 and over the years became a leader at the Board level, serving as Board Chair for three one-year terms in the 1990s and three terms as Chair in the next decade. He served on the Board’s Negotiating Team for various employee negotiations and has been a member of the Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium Governance Committee. He

has also chaired the Board's Business and Corporate Services Committee and the Educational Services Committee and served as the trustee representative on the Board's Parent Involvement Committee.

In 2017, Andy was the recipient of the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association Trustee Merit Award. This award recognizes trustees who have provided exceptional service to education over the years.

Bob added that Andy is a man of integrity and faith and a strong witness to the Catholic community and in recognition of Andy's contributions to the RCCDSB and his dedication to Catholic education in Renfrew County, the Board honoured him by naming the learning commons space at St. Joseph's School, Arnprior as the Andrew Bray Learning Commons.

OCSTA also wanted to acknowledge Mr. Bray's contributions to Catholic education and Mr. Schreader read a letter from Nick Milanetti, OCSTA's Executive Director, thanking Andy for his dedication and years of service as a faith-filled trustee.

Bob Schreader thanked Andy for his long-standing forty years of service to the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board and presented him with gifts from the Board and from the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association.

Meeting Dates

- August 26 - Board Meeting – Administration Office
 - Committee of the Whole – 4:00 p.m.
 - General Meeting – 4:45 p.m.

Bob Schreader thanked his fellow trustees for their dedicated work throughout the 2023-2024 school year, acknowledging the time and commitment they have shown. He said that each of them has taken a leadership role chairing committees and wished them another successful year during the 2024-2025 school year.

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 June 24, 2024 be approved.

...Carried

RESOLUTION #11

Moved by Susan Artymko
Seconded by Andy Bray
That the meeting be adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

...Carried



Chairperson, Renfrew County Catholic
District School Board



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

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July 4, 2024