

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, March 25, 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: Alice Anne LeMay (former long serving Catholic trustee for the Halton Catholic DSB and OCSTA Board member).

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

RESOLUTION #1

Moved by Jerry Lavalley

Seconded by Dave Howard

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

...Carried

RESOLUTION #2

Moved by Pat O'Grady

Seconded by Andy Bray

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 - 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
Regrets:	Trustees	- Susan Artymko - Anne Haley - Jerry Lavalley

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION #3

Moved by Pat O'Grady
 Seconded by Dave Howard
 That the Agenda for the March 25, 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 Andy Bray
 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, February 26, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

DISBURSEMENT LIST

RESOLUTION #5

Moved by Dave Howard
 Seconded by Pat O'Grady
 That the listing of payments as shown on MAR2 be approved as presented.

...Carried

PRESENTATION

Student Action Plan – MYSP Review

Mark Searson explained that as part of Bill 98, the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, the Ministry has released a Student Achievement Plan Framework, which requires school boards to set out goals and performance indicators for boards to monitor student achievement. Fixed comparators have been supplied by the Ministry. The Student Achievement Plan will be embedded in every board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and consists of three pillars: 1) Achievement of Learning Outcomes in Core Academic Skills, 2) Preparation of Students for Future Success, and 3) Student Engagement & Well-Being. These three pillars align with our three academic superintendents' portfolios and they each reviewed the data and next steps pertinent to their roles.

Derek Lennox reviewed the information included under the pillar “Achievement of Learning Outcomes in Core Academic Skills, 2022-2023”. The 2022-2023 EQAO data shows that our Board outperformed the provincial standard in Grade 3 reading, Grade 3 writing, Grade 6 reading and Grade 6 writing and in OSSLT, we are within 1% of the province. Our 2022-23 report card data is also provided, giving the percentage of students who meet or exceed the provincial standards and our results are fairly close to the EQAO data. The actions our board will take to improve are outlined in the links provided for our 2023-24 Math Action and Achievement Plan, the School Achievement Plan in Mathematics and the 2023-24 School Achievement Plan in Literacy.

Heidi Fraser then gave an outline of the pillar “Preparation of Students for Future Success, 2021-2022”, with information on the percentage of students graduating with an OSSD within five years of starting Grade 9, the percentage of students who earn 16 or more credits by the end of Grade 10, the percentage enrolled in at least one Grade 12 math or Grade 11 or 12 science course, the percentage of students participating in at least one job skills program (SHSM, Dual Credits or OYAP) and the percentage of students who believe their learning has prepared them for the next step in their learning experience. She noted that our percentage of students graduating is right on target with the provincial standard.

Clint Young reviewed the pillar “Student Engagement & Well-Being, 2021-2022”, noting that school attendance is key to student performance. The data provides a measure of:

- the percentage of students in Grades 4-12 who were suspended at least once (Board 3.02% - Province 3.32%)
- the percentage of students in Grades 1-8 whose individual attendance rate is equal to or greater than 90 percent (Board 30.5% - Province 52.6%). Clint noted our number of 30.5% compared to the province, making our achievements under the first pillar (Achievement of Learning Outcomes in Core Academic Skills) even more extraordinary. He explained that our numbers began to slip pre-covid and the gap has widened. We are working proactively to educate parents on the importance of attendance and the School and Attendance Counsellors, along with the mental health and wellness team, are working on a Board-wide emphasis on student attendance and re-engagement strategies
- Data is being gathered on the measure of students who believe their learning has prepared them for their next step in their education and on students who report being aware of mental health supports and services in order to seek that support.

Data was also provided on suspensions and students who have sought mental health supports. While the Board’s Grade 4-12 suspension data is below the provincial average, the Board has noted an increase in suspensions in Grades 6-10 and proactive strategies to support student behaviour and promote positive mental health and wellness are being implemented.

Mark thanked his team for presenting the data in the Student Achievement Plan. The Plan will be posted on the Board’s webpage by April 2nd and consultation will then take place with the Board’s stakeholders.

Bob Schreader thanked everyone for all the information they provided. One of the roles of trustee is to ensure student success and this gives us a good idea of where we are at.

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

Pembroke Schools

Bob Schreader, local Trustee, reported on activities taking place at the Board's Pembroke schools.

Our Lady of Lourdes, Pembroke

- Students and staff began the Lenten season with an Ash Wednesday "Liturgy of the Word" celebrated by Father Holly;
- The school is also collecting non-perishable food items for the local food bank during Lent and students will participate in the Stations of the Cross on Holy Thursday and reflect with prayer during Holy Week;
- School council has a number of extra curricular activities planned for students; the school hosted a "Movie Night" for students on March 22nd with popcorn and drinks; they are also hosting a Grade 5/6 dance in April for students and Holy Name and Cathedral students have been invited to join as well;
- After March Break, students participated in a school wide St. Patrick's Day party complete with green ice cream, leprechaun scavenger hunts and an Irish Kahoot game;
- On March 22nd, students participated in their Science Fair and the winners are encouraged to register for the Regional Science Fair at the Civic Centre in Petawawa on April 6th;
- Our Lady of Lourdes is proud to be an Extended French learning school and School Principal, Amy Sicoli, would like to relay a huge thanks to Madame Diab and Madame Blain for enrolling students in Grades 4-6 in "Manie Musicale", an annual international competition that includes 16 contemporary songs by Francophone artists. Our Lady of Lourdes is one of the 6,200 schools participating worldwide with more than 679,000 students voting. Students listen to songs in their classes, they then discover the artist and the lyrics and they learn new vocabulary. They discuss which songs they like best and vote online with other students from around the world to determine which artists will advance to the next round and ultimately win.
- Grade 6 students attended the Grade 7 orientation at Bishop Smith CHS on March 21st; they toured the school and learned what opportunities are available to them during their transition to high school, including a visit to the transportation, music and healthcare classes and even baked cookies in the hospitality room.

Holy Name School, Pembroke

- The school has been taking advantage of learning outdoors and utilizing the natural outdoor spaces, with many classes learning about science, geography and weather;
- School Principal, Ryan Kranz, thanks the school volunteers and school council who served a delicious Shrove Tuesday meal for all students and staff
- The school community celebrated Ash Wednesday Mass with Father Beachey. Father Beachey's message of giving alms has continued to resonate throughout the school community during the season of Lent;
- Each day, Holy Name students demonstrate acts of kindness, respect and dignity towards others in many ways. Along with the rest of RCCDSB, Holy Name celebrated Kindness Week during the first week of March and students were given challenges, resources and opportunities for prayer and reflection;
- To celebrate all the hard work students have put in throughout the winter months, the school held a winter carnival, with many activities such as face painting, balloon art with Mr. Dimples, musical chairs and giant inflatables in the gym;
- The school is also proud to offer the Extended French Learning Program for students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3;

Cathedral, Pembroke

- Just before March Break, students participated in an Irish themed spirit day, dressing up in green, gold and white and joining in on the Morning Freeze Dance!
- Father Do welcomed students and staff into the church on Ash Wednesday for the Liturgy of the Word. Students had the opportunity to work with Father to deepen their faith through Lent and also joined for a faith walk around the Cathedral Parish. During the Virtue of the Month prayer service, each class takes turns preparing our service and presenting Virtue awards to students and staff; this month's virtue is Forgiveness;
- The school put on a "Get Your Irish On" school spirit day, learning about St. Patrick and good old Irish music and dance. Student Council set up door decorating contests, Limerick competitions, outdoor recess races and learning how to prepare for the Arctic games;
- Classroom teachers and support staff continue to work hard, focusing on closing gaps in reading and math; everyone is busy learning, from math fun to letters on whiteboards, artwork, reading, writing and outdoor learning;
- The Grade 6 students recently participated in an orientation visit to Bishop Smith CHS, meeting the staff and checking out the different classrooms and gym to baking cookies;
- Cathedral has also kicked off its Lenten Food Drive for the local food banks, continuing to remind everyone about the three Lenten Pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Business and Corporate Services Committee Report

In the absence of Anne Haley, Dave Howard reported on the meeting held March 4, 2024.

Community Use of Schools – A summary of community use of schools' fees was provided as an information item.

At the Board Meeting, discussion was held on the Board's current rental fees and this item will be placed on a future BCS meeting for further review.

Educational Services Committee Meeting Report

Committee Chair Pat O'Grady reported on the meeting held March 4, 2024.

Presentation – OYAP Special Projects – Stephen Charkavi, Secondary Experiential Learning/Pathways Coordinator, attended the meeting to present the special projects held during Semester 1:

1. Level-Up Skilled Trades Fair – the fair was held in Ottawa and showcased a wide range of skilled trades and union representation. Local trades were also represented. This was a very hands-on fair where students were able to do such things as bend sheet metal and pour concrete. A tour of Algonquin College in Ottawa was held in the afternoon to show the students what courses are available in the trades, such as automotive and construction.
2. Jill of All Trades – held at Algonquin College in Pembroke and hosted by Conestoga College. The keynote speaker spoke about pursuing different pathways and overcoming obstacles.
3. Special Projects for Girls – a former RCCDSB graduate who now works at CNL, was given two days off work to showcase the welding he does at his job. He was able to bring materials from CNL that aren't available at our Board and highlighted the opportunities that are available in this trade. Five students are now interested in going into a welding placement.
4. Meat Cutting Workshop – with funding from Skills Ontario, OYAP and SHSM, this workshop was held at Bishop Smith CHS over two days. The students learned how to debone a chicken, make pork sausages, stewing beef and hamburger. They were able to take home packages of the meats and a knife cutting set. In the spring, Mr. Charkavi would like to run a second part with students learning how to make pepperettes.

Youth Violence Prevention Symposium #1 – Scott Lafreniere and Tom Carroll organized this symposium for Grade 7 and 8 students and staff. The program was developed by the Durham Region and a Renfrew County spin was put on the program. It is made up of six different modules that can be shown on the classroom TV or whiteboard.

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

2024 Catholic Education Week – An OCSTA memo with information on the theme for this year’s CEW “Catholic Education: We are Called to Love” and CEW materials for schools was reviewed.

Funding Opportunity – FSL Resources – Nadia Shoemaker, our FSL SPAT, has applied for these funds and we are waiting to hear back from the Ministry. These funds will help to bring STEM into our French classes.

Proposed Amendments to Regulation 298: Operation of Schools – A Ministry memo was shared, outlining new graduation requirements for students.

Professional Development Funding for Early Childhood Educators – Our Board has received \$8,256 to provide professional development for our ECEs in the 2023-24 school year.

Special Education Advisory Committee Report

In the absence of the Committee Chair, Bob Schreader reported on the meeting held March 6, 2024.

Presentation – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – Katherine McLaughlin, Special Education Coordinator, presented the Board’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the period January 2024 to January 2025. This is the fourteenth plan prepared by the accessibility working group since the AODA first required each school board to prepare a plan and to consult with people with disabilities and to make the plan public. Once the plan has been updated, it will be presented to the Special Education Advisory Committee and then sent to the Board for approval.

Several barriers that have been identified for people with disabilities are:

- Attitudinal barriers
- Architectural and physical barriers
- Technological barriers
- Information or communication barriers
- Policies and practices which create barriers

The homework for this month is to review the plan and if any SEAC members have any suggested changes they are asked to contact Clint Young or Donna McEwen.

Bruce-Grey CDSB Special Education Plan – The Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB is closest to our Board in terms of size and geography. Committee members were asked to contact Clint Young or Donna McEwen if they have any suggestions.

February 2nd PA Day for Educational Assistants – All of the Board’s EAs got together on the February 2nd PA Day at St. Joseph’s High School. They rotated through four different sessions:

1. ABA Team
2. SLP Team – “A PIAACE for Communication”
3. Belonging & Inclusion: Why Accessibility Matters
4. Mental Health & Wellness – Unpacking Supporting Minds

The feedback received from the EAs was amazing, as the majority felt it was the best professional development they’ve had this year. This format will continue for future PD.

EA Survey Results – An objective of the EA allocation consulting engagement was to confirm what EAs are tasked with, in their specific schools. The Regional Internal Audit Team (RIAT) prepared a survey that was distributed to the EAs. 100% of permanent EAs, 85% of temporary EAs and 12% of casual EAs responded.

Take-aways from the survey are:

- 36% of permanent EAs spend time planning, preparing and delivering programming for high needs students, which are tasks that should be performed by teachers;
- The EA job description was very detailed and informative in comparison to other school boards in the Eastern Ontario region;
- 59% of permanent, 63% of temporary and 56% of casual EA staff disagreed with the statement that RCCDSB offers sufficient and appropriate PD;
- EAs duplicate and compile materials, prepare and set up materials and file materials from 41% to 85% of the time, several times a day/month;
- 47-60% of EAs feel they are listened to in the decision-making process;
- A higher percentage of temp EAs to permanent EAs have access to documentation that they need to do their work.

Another survey will be completed the next time there is a professional development day for the EAs.

2024-2025 Support Allocation Process Memo – The Board has already begun the process of getting ready for the next school year. Each school team will complete an Independence Rubric (IR) for all students that may require the support of an Educational Assistant in the upcoming school year. School teams are required to submit their IRs to the Board on or before March 29th. At that time, Clint Young, Katherine McLaughlin and Kelly Etmanskie will spend weeks going through all of the data and by the end of May/early June, independent meetings will be held with each school principal to discuss the IRs and the students who warrant EA help for the next school year.

Association Reports – There were no reports.

Next Meeting Date – The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Secondary School Report – Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke

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

Student Council

- Beach Day was held on March 6th
- Blue and Gold Day was held on the 8th
- Wear Green Day was held on the 18th for St. Patrick's Day

Athletics

- The senior girls' volleyball team travelled to Sydenham to compete in the OFSAA championship
- The student vs teacher hockey game was held on March 8th; this was the first time it was held since covid
- The girls' hockey team won the county championship and travelled to Cornwall to compete in the EOSSAA championship

Arts

- The new Bishop Bears logo was revealed during an assembly prior to the student vs. teacher hockey game

Pastoral

- Optional confessions were held in the Chapel last Thursday, March 21st

Travel

- A number of students and teachers travelled to Italy over the March Break, and everyone had an amazing time

OCSTA Information Items

Bob Schreader highlighted several of the documents provided by OCSTA and asked that the trustees take the time to review them.

- a. Copyright Litigation Update
- b. LET – Federal Gov't Food Policy Budget
- c. OCSTA-OSTA Catholic Student Trustee Servant Leadership Scholarship
- d. Memo – Integrity Commissioner and Electronic Meeting Regulations Feb/24 Consultation
- e. FSL Experiential Learning Resources
- f. On the Road Together – Third Sunday in Lent 2024
- g. On the Road Together – Fourth Sunday of Lent – Seeing Discerning Clearly
- h. Regulation on Director Performance Appraisals
- i. Joint Letter to OTF re: Temporary Increase to 50-day Employment Limit
- j. Letter from OTF to Minister of Education re: Temporary Amendment to Reemployment Rules
- k. Memo – OCSTA Speaker Series – Catholic Social Teachings on Social Media
- l. Living Within the Laws of Creation – A Dialogue with Pope Francis

FUTURE BUSINESS

General/Trustees' Comments

Bob Schreder noted that at the Minister's teleconference last week, the Minister spoke about the possibility of extending the 50-day teaching limit for retired teachers to 90 days, which would assist school boards with occasional teacher staffing shortages. Further information will be provided after their next meeting.

Bob reported that he participated in the Northern/Rural Advisory Council Meeting last week. He said that he was speaking with Pat Daly about the driver recruitment and retention bonus that Pat O'Grady had enquired about, and Pat Daly has informed him that his board has developed a template which he can send to us if we wish. Bob also spoke about the availability of rural internet and that OCSTA is still working to ensure sufficient availability.

Meeting Dates

- April 8 - Christian Community Day
- April 10 - Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m. – Virtual
- April 15 - Business & Corporate Services Committee Meeting
4:00 p.m. – Board Office
- April 15 - Educational Services Committee Meeting
following BCS Meeting – Board Office
- April 29 - Board Meeting - Committee of the Whole – 4:00 p.m.
- General Meeting – 4:45 p.m.

RESOLUTION #6

Moved by Dave Howard
Seconded by Pat O'Grady

That the recommendations made by motion and consensus in the Committee of the Whole meeting of March 25, 2024 be approved.

...Carried

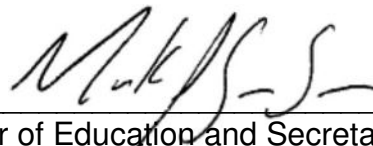
RESOLUTION #7

Moved by Andy Bray
Seconded by Pat O'Grady
That the meeting be adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

...Carried



Chairperson, Renfrew County Catholic
District School Board



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

/nl
April 4, 2024