

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, November 27, 2023 at 4:45 p.m.

Bob Schreader, Chair of the Board, began the meeting by acknowledging the traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin people, followed by an opening prayer.

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	- 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
Regrets:	Trustees	- Susan Artymko - Andy Bray

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION #3

Moved by David Howard
Seconded by Pat O'Grady

That the Agenda for the November 27, 2023 Committee of the Whole Portion of the 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 Anne Haley

That the Minutes of the General Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board held in the Board Room on Monday, October 30, 2023 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

RESOLUTION #5

Moved by Pat O'Grady
Seconded by David Howard

That the Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board held in the Library at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

DISBURSEMENT LIST

RESOLUTION #6

Moved by David Howard
Seconded by Jerry Lavalley

That the listing of payments as shown on NOV3 be approved as presented.

...Carried

Bob Schreder enquired about the BMO Financial items and was told that it is for the Board Mastercards.

PRESENTATION

Communications Presentation

Unfortunately, the presentation had to be postponed to a future meeting due to illness.

NEW BUSINESS

Retirements

RESOLUTION #7

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Pat O'Grady

That the Board accept the following retirements with regret:

- Sheila Mask, Caretaker at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, effective November 17, 2024; and
- Bonnie Kwiatkowski, Educational Assistant at St. Joseph's, Arnprior, effective January 31, 2024.

...Carried

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

Arnprior and Calabogie Schools

Dave Howard reported on activities taking place in the Board's Arnprior and Calabogie schools, in Andy Bray's absence.

St. John XXIII, Arnprior

- Students celebrated Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week (PINK Week) from November 19 – 25 and held a school Mass to kick-start the week. Students worked hard to show how peaceful, inclusive, noble and kind they are to others and they received a pink ticket and signed their name on the PINK Week sign at the front foyer of the school in recognition of their kindness;
- Learning more about and implementing a universal design for learning framework is a school goal at St. John XXIII. This allows all students to access the curriculum the best way that suits their needs and barriers to learning are considered and removed. The school has developed student profiles to better assist students who may require more support in the classroom;
- Every month, the school holds a Super Student Assembly to recognize students who demonstrate one of the Catholic Graduate Expectations and/or one of the seven Grandfather Teachings;
- Staff have also engaged in various professional development activities (whole school and individualized); the Board Program Team has also worked with staff with a focus on French, language arts (early reading instruction), special education and EQAO gap training;

- Early morning volleyball practices have begun in preparation for the upcoming tournament on November 29th. Intramurals also run 4 days a week at lunch hour for grades 3, 4, 5 and 6; a big thank you to the coaches for making this happen;
- Students are preparing for their Christmas Concert. Auditions are being held for speaking and acting roles in “Hotel Bethlehem” and all classrooms have started to learn the songs and choreography;
- Students pray and experience real connections to parish life through community masses at St. John Chrysostom Parish twice a month; the school choir and Grade 6 students provided wonderful leadership at mass on Sunday, November 19th and students have been encouraged to make a difference as faith-filled community builders by collecting items and donations for people in need.

St. Joseph’s, Arnprior

- Students were thrilled to participate in the Fall Fest that concluded at the end of their fall raffles; school council gathered some amazing raffle ticket items and the Fall Fest was a huge success; the school sends a big thank you to all the community partners who donated items or services to the event;
- Every month, the school hosts Life-Long Learner presentations, where the whole school participates in the Catholic Education Week prayer and announcement assembly; these presentations help recognize students for going above and beyond which helps encourage this behaviour year-round;
- Along with St. John XXIII, volleyball season has started and students are thrilled to participate;
- Students and staff have also been preparing for the Christmas concert, a bilingual celebration of song;
- PINK Week celebrations were underway during the week of November 19-25; to encourage students to be peaceful, inclusive, noble and kind, staff are handing out kindness cards that were entered into a draw at the end of the week to recognize students for their kindness;
- Grade 6 students have been hard at work on their STEM projects; they created seeding machines and had the opportunity to test them out in the classroom;
- A very successful Scholastic Book Fair was held; a great way to encourage reading amongst all grades.

St. Joseph’s, Calabogie

- Students have been blessed to have volunteer readers in French and English, who work with students 4 days a week;
- Leading up to Remembrance Day, students submitted several art and poetry pieces into the Renfrew Legion’s Remembrance Day contest; schools across the county also held Remembrance Day ceremonies to remember all those who have selflessly served our country;
- Students also participated in PINK Week for Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week; the school was a sea of pink to show how peaceful, inclusive, noble and kind all the students are.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Business and Corporate Services Committee Report

Dave Howard, Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held November 13, 2023.

Plant Projects – Ian Byce, Manager of Plant Services, gave an update on the work that the Plant Department has been working on. Proposals have been received in regard to school accessibility, which will be brought forward to the Board. The trustees asked that a cost estimate of the plant projects be provided at the next closed BCS meeting.

Community Use of Schools – The Heart Wise Program has requested an exemption of rental fees for their use of St. Joseph’s High School, Renfrew to use the school hallways for seniors or anyone in the community that needs to exercise in the winter months. They walk from 4:00 – 7:00 every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and will be purchasing liability insurance.

RESOLUTION #8

Moved by David Howard

Seconded by Anne Haley

That the Board approve the request for a waiver of rental fees for Marlene Lavallee of the Heart Wise Program at St. Joseph’s High School, Renfrew, provided that the required insurance is purchased.

...Carried

Educational Services Committee Meeting Report

Anne Haley, Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held November 13, 2023.

Presentation: Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) – Julie Huckabone and Tammy Peplinski attended the meeting to provide an overview of the Board’s SAL program. SAL stands for Supervised Alternative Learning and is an opportunity for the Board to keep students enrolled who are disengaged from school for a variety of reasons. This has been done informally for the last couple of years but as we are seeing a rise in 14-15 year-olds who need this program, it needs to become more formal, which the Ministry has recognized.

The students meet with a primary contact every couple of weeks, with a minimum of once a month. The primary contacts are Tammy Peplinski, Gerry Benoit for our Indigenous students and our two Alternative School teachers, Craig Brunton and Carolyn Hass.

A soft launch was held in the spring of 2023, with the formal launch in September 2023. The members of the SAL Committee are Julie Huckabone, Tammy Peplinski, Heidi Fraser, Susan Artymko and Sue Hanniman, as well as the administrators from St. Joseph’s High School.

Last year, a total of 8-10 students were in the program and this year, there are 34 students – 21 students from BSCHS and 13 students from SJHS. Ministry funding for the thirty-four students was received in the amount of \$140,000.

Moving forward, the Committee will need to maintain and sustain the programming for these students and balance attendance supports while supporting the program. Staff development is also a key initiative.

EOCCC New Math Resource – This was an information item.

Treaties Week Resources – This year our Indigenous Education Coordinator, Kellie Hisko, asked schools to sign up for presentations for Treaties Week. Presentations were held at eleven schools and they were very well received.

Interview Night Flyers – This flyer will be distributed during parent/teacher interviews. Also, a QR code will be posted while parents are waiting for their interview with a 3-5 minute survey.

November Mental Health Newsletter – Rebecca Paulsen was acknowledged and thanked for another creative newsletter.

Jill of All Trades – VIP Invitation – Stephen Charkavi, our Secondary Experiential Coordinator, took 36 girls from BSCHS and 18 from SJHS to Algonquin College for this presentation to get hands-on experience with several different trades.

Virtual Career Fair – In the past, we have been invited to send students to a virtual career fair. St. Joseph's High School sent 12 students this year. This was great exposure for these students to learn about different career opportunities.

Accelerated Apprenticeship Pathway – The Ministry is proposing two models for consideration to implement the accelerated apprenticeship pathway because of the lack of skilled tradespeople:

- Equivalent Apprenticeship Learning whereby the student remains a student of their school board while pursuing apprenticeship learning full-time;
- Employer Supervised Apprenticeship whereby the apprentice would no longer be a student of the school board and would be excused from attendance at school while pursuing apprenticeship learning full-time.

Our Board submitted feedback with a lot more questions than answers. The Committee will be updated once a response is received from the Ministry.

Bob added that the board had planned to send a letter to the Minister about the proposed models but OCSTA has submitted a letter to the Ministry which includes a lot of our points. There is no need now for us to send a letter of our own.

2023:SB20 – 2023-24 Follow-up to Grants for Student Needs (GSN) – Derek Lennox reported that this was great news as one of the action items we are looking into is hiring an Indigenous Educational Instructional Coach to dig deeper in terms of classroom instruction.

OECM Vendor of Record for Early Reading Screening Tools – The Board has been waiting on this information. The three awarded suppliers are:

- Acadiance Learning Inc. (Acadiance Reading tool)
- NCS Pearson Inc. (AimsWebPlus tool)
- Nelson Education Ltd. (easyCBM tool)

In early January, our team will take a deeper look into each of these vendors to decide which one would be the best for our students. We are looking at a September 2024 kickoff.

Remembrance Week – This was an information item.

Ontario Strengthening Holocaust Education in High Schools – The government is introducing new and expanded mandatory learning about the Holocaust in the compulsory Grade 10 History course. The Ministry is highlighting the Grade 10 course but it should be noted that our Board teaches students about the Holocaust in several high school courses.

April 26, 2024 PA Day – It has come to the Board’s attention that on Monday, April 8, 2024 there will be a solar eclipse visible in our area right around the time of dismissal for our students. Discussion has taken place regarding this event, given the serious medical conditions that can result from looking at the sun during a solar eclipse, even for a few seconds. Implementing any specific precautionary measures, especially for students at dismissal time, when children must be outside to catch a bus or walk home, becomes a problem with many factors out of the schools’ control.

Some school boards specifically made this day a PA Day when they set this year’s calendars and some have since submitted a calendar change to the Ministry of Education to have this day changed to a PA Day. The RCCDSB/RCDSB Calendar Committee members have indicated that they are in agreement with moving the date of the PA Day given the timing of the solar eclipse. The Ministry of Education has advised that the Boards have the authority to make this change.

RESOLUTION #9

Moved by Pat O’Grady

Seconded by Jerry Lavalley

That the PA Day scheduled for Friday, April 26, 2024 be moved to Monday, April 8, 2024 due to the solar eclipse that will take place on April 8, 2024, with the understanding that the Renfrew County District School Board is in agreement with this move.

...Carried

Special Education Advisory Committee Report

Committee Chair, Pat O’Grady, reported on the meeting held November 8, 2023.

Presentation: Angela Bergeron, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Itinerant and Accessibility Lead – Angela Bergeron was welcomed to the meeting. She explained

that currently in our Board, we have 26 deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students – 24 in elementary and 2 in secondary, with another 6 students with different exceptionalities who benefit from the use of deaf and hard of hearing equipment. We currently have no students who use American Sign Language (ASL). Most of the support that is currently provided is at the Tier 1 and 2 levels, and only a small number of students require Tier 3 support. Angela's first step was to meet with all the students in her caseload and do an environmental assessment of their classroom, meet with the students and staff to discuss how they hear in the classroom, and to make sure their equipment has been set up properly. A big focus is on strengthening the student's self-advocacy skills that will grow with them and to also be able to develop strategies on becoming more familiar with their personal hearing device. Another focus is on the families of the DHH students and developing a better understanding of how we provide the best access to curriculum at school – through the IEP, accommodations, SEA equipment. Another priority is meeting with staff, including classroom teams, administrators and other support staff.

The accessibility part of Angela's role will be focusing on transitions – from Valleycrest to home school or vice versa, and transitioning students from elementary to secondary. Accessibility can also include physical barriers, attitudinal barriers, behaviours, barriers to accessing equipment and even teachers not aware of new technology to be utilized with students. By January 2025 all public buildings will need to be barrier-free, and Angela will also be assisting with an accessibility audit of all Board schools.

Inaugural Meeting Invitation – The Board's Inaugural Meeting will be held on November 20th and a SEAC member is invited to attend and bring greetings from SEAC. Anyone interested was asked to email Clint Young and if no one is able to attend, Mr. Young will represent the committee.

November 17, 2023 PA Day Plans for EA's – The Educational Assistants will be in their own buildings on this PA Day to work on professional development, including assistive technology, supply plan help, trauma and attachment, ABA101 and Everyday Speech. Feedback from the EA survey hasn't been received yet and once it is received and analyzed, plans will be made accordingly for future professional development.

Itinerant EA Follow-Up – This was a new pilot program for an itinerant EA to provide daily absence replacement and to provide short term support. There has been such a need in our kindergarten classrooms this Fall, that our itinerant EAs have been providing short term relief in all the schools about 80% of the time.

Special Education Plan 2023-2024 – Our plan was compared to the Ottawa Catholic School Board's and the overall information was similar, as the Ministry provides a provincial template for boards to follow. A few Committee members commented on how much more visibly pleasing their plan is and at the next meeting, an alternate format will be presented for the committee to review.

Association Reports – There were no Association reports.

Next Meeting Date – The next SEAC meeting will be on Wednesday, January 17, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Secondary School Report

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

Student Council

- The annual snowsuit drive has started for CPAN (Community Poverty Action Network);
- The schools Angel Tree Program has also started in support of the Food Bank

Athletics

- The senior girls' basketball team placed second at EOSSA;
- The senior boys' volleyball team placed first at EOSSA and are headed to OFSAA

Arts

- The school held a successful coffee house on November 16th

Pastoral

- A community friendship meal was held at Our Lady of Fatima by the Catholic Women's League

February Trustee Retreat

Bob Schreder said that if everyone is in agreement, the Trustee Retreat scheduled for February 1-2, will go ahead as planned.

Trustee Honorarium

This was an information item, providing the trustee honorarium calculations for the period November 15, 2023 to November 14, 2024.

Request for Out-of-Country School Trip

A request was received from Tara Crossman, a teacher at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke to take students to Europe over March Break 2024. They are planning to go to Venice, Florence and Rome.

RESOLUTION #10

Moved by Pat O'Grady

Seconded by Jerry Lavalley

That the Board approve the request from Tara Crossman, Teacher at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, to take students to Europe in March 2024, 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

OCSTA Information Items

Bob Schreader noted many of the information items received from OCSTA.

- a. Consultation on Accelerated Apprenticeship Pathways
- b. Memo and Form – Trustee Award of Merit
- c. Memo and Form – Student Trustee Alumni Award
- d. Ont News Release – Ontario Strengthening Holocaust Education in High Schools
- e. Ont News Release – Ontario’s 2023 Fall Economic Statement Supports Growth Across the Province
- f. Memo – Student Attendance Practices Summary
- g. OCSTA Speaker Series Event Recording of a Layperson’s Synodal Journey
- h. Catholic Education Week – Advance Kit
- i. Presentations to the OCSTA First Nation Trustees Advisory Council
- j. On the Road Together – Discerning Leadership – Developing Talent
- k. OCSTA Submission – Accelerated Apprenticeship Pathway Consultation

FUTURE BUSINESS

General/Trustees’ Comments

Bob Schreader noted the Pembroke Knights of Columbus’ recent donation of \$250 each to thirteen schools to help the schools purchase Christmas gifts for children in need. He added that the Knights of Columbus also contribute funds towards school Breakfast Programs.

Mr. Schreader distributed a small token of appreciation to all the trustees as a recognition of all the work they do to ensure a quality education for the students in our Catholic schools. He acknowledged as well, all the work that our administration does on a daily basis.

A gift of appreciation was also given to the Executive Assistant, for the work she does to assist the trustees throughout the year.

Meeting Dates

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|------------|---|---|
| January 8 | - | Audit Committee Meeting
2:00 p.m. – Board Office |
| January 8 | - | Business & Corporate Services Committee Meeting
4:00 p.m. – Board Office |
| January 8 | - | Educational Services Committee Meeting
Following BCS Meeting – Board Office |
| January 17 | - | Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m. – Virtual Meeting |
| January 29 | - | Board Meeting - Committee of the Whole – 4:00 p.m.
- General Meeting – 4:45 p.m. |

Bob Schreader said that he will be in touch with trustees over the next couple of weeks to discuss Committee Chairs and what suits the trustees' and the Board's needs.

RESOLUTION #11

Moved by David Howard

Seconded by Anne Haley

That the recommendations made by motion and consensus in the Committee of the Whole meeting of November 27, 2023 be approved.

...Carried

RESOLUTION #

Moved by Jerry Lavalley

Seconded by Pat O'Grady

That the meeting be adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

...Carried



Chairperson, Renfrew County Catholic
District School Board



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