

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, October 28, 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: Dr. Peter McEnery (former Algonquin & Lakeshore CDSB Trustee), Joseph Whibbs (former Trustee of the Peterborough, Victoria Northumberland & Clarington CDSB).

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 Susan Artymko

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	- Susan Artymko - Anne Haley - Jeannie Ivory - Jerry Lavalley - Pat O'Grady
	Student Representative	- 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
Absent:	Student Representative	- Ben Wood (regrets)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION #3

Moved by Susan Artymko
 Seconded by David Howard
 That the Agenda for the October 28, 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 Jerry Lavalley
 That the Minutes of the General Meeting of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board held in the Board Room on Monday, September 30, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

DISBURSEMENT LIST

RESOLUTION #5

Moved by Jeannie Ivory
 Seconded by Anne Haley
 That the listing of payments as shown on OCT2 be approved as presented.

...Carried

PRESENTATION

Cyber Security

October is Cyber Security Awareness month and Gabriel Cloutier, the Board's Manager of Technology and Security Services, attended the meeting to provide an update on cybersecurity measures that are being implemented throughout the board. He explained that there are many forms of cyberattacks, including malware, phishing and ransomware. Implementing cybersecurity measures helps protect against these attacks. Cyberattacks are increasing in frequency and sophistication and organizations of all sizes are vulnerable. The potential consequences of a successful attack are severe,

resulting in data loss, financial damage and reputational harm. It is important to build a strong defense by implementing robust security measures such as firewalls, antivirus software and strong passwords. We want to be in a position to stay as far ahead of attackers as we can and we can do this through regular security awareness training for staff, developing an incident response plan and continuous monitoring and vulnerability assessments.

Gabe noted the Board's Microsoft Secure Score, which is a representation of our organization's security posture and our opportunity to improve it. Since hiring an IT Security Officer, our security posture has increased from 38% to 67%. Organizations of a similar size typically have a Secure Score of less than 45%. The RCCDSB has deployed numerous tools to protect our students and staff, which includes Microsoft Defender Antivirus, Endpoint, Office 365, Identity and Cloud Apps. We participate in Cyber Security Awareness Month, deploying resources to classroom teachers that include lesson plans and activities.

He noted that many of the Board's IT policies are outdated and need to reflect the cyber landscape. We need to have strong policy to ensure staff and student clarity. The Board has also begun the process of record retention to convert our records into a document management system.

Our HR database, which was designed in 1994, is not well supported by the vendor and replacing this software could be a significant improvement in our security posture. Our licensed software is up to date with only a few older versions. Mr. Cloutier explained that we have 1200+ applications managed across Windows, macOS and via the web that need to be inventoried, catalogued and mapped for redundancies. Staff continue to buy software/hardware without IT consultation, resulting in security and data risk, duplication, increased out of band support and board or ministry money not being efficiently leveraged.

In the area of our network infrastructure, 42% of our network equipment will be upgraded by the end of 2025 to bring more reliability and security to our students. Network speeds have been standardized to ensure high speed internet for all users and staff devices are being standardized to Windows devices to streamline support and ensure compatibility with our systems.

The IT department's plans include using FortiSASE to combine network and security tools in the cloud to better protect and manage board assets. Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD) are also being investigated to determine the impact they have on network speeds. An inventory of all assets is being planned as well.

Bob Schreader thanked Gabriel for his very informative and excellent presentation and wished the technology department the best in all of their many endeavours.

NEW BUSINESS

Retirements

RESOLUTION #6

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Pat O'Grady

That the Board accept the following retirements with regret:

- William Prange, Caretaker at Our Lady of Lourdes School, Pembroke, effective January 3, 2025;
- Carolyn Hass, Teacher at St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew, effective December 31, 2024.

...Carried

Nomination of Board Chair and Vice-Chair

Trustees were asked to advise Dave Howard, Chair of the Nominating Committee, if they wish to nominate someone for Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

Douglas and Eganville Schools

Pat O'Grady, local Trustee, reported on activities taking place at the Douglas and Eganville schools.

St. Michael's, Douglas

- St. Michael's hosted their Open House BBQ at the end of September, for students and families to visit the school and get to know the staff;
- Students had the chance to represent their school at the Cobden Milk Run on October 16; despite cold temperatures, the athletes did a great job as many qualified in the top 10;
- St. Michael's Race Day began with a beautiful prayer service from Father Kenney; a big thank you to the volunteers, students and staff members who offered encouragement along the race route
- The Intramural Flag Football teams at St. Michael's had a successful day in Renfrew; the Junior team, the Kittens, and the Intermediate team, the Lions, both secured victories; a big thank you to the coaches, Mrs. Jessup and Mr. Horton for coaching the students and travelling to Renfrew
- School Council has been planning numerous spirit days, including Pyjama Day, Musical Genre Spirit Day and Fall Fashion Day
- The school had a successful Thanksgiving Food Drive thanks to students, staff and families. The Cobden Food Bank received a generous donation thanks to the student council's hard work collecting food

St. James, Eganville

- The school recently hosted a Movie & PJ Night for students, staff and families;
- The school participated in the cross-country event at Bishop Smith CHS; students worked hard and had a great time despite the colder temperatures;
- The school celebrated the outstanding students who received this month's Virtue of the Month Award for Hospitality; these students have consistently demonstrated warmth, kindness and inclusivity and exemplify the spirit of hospitality by going out of their way to make others feel comfortable and valued;
- St. James also recognized the recipients of the Effective Communicator Award; these students excel at expressing themselves clearly and respectfully, whether through written or spoken word. They actively listen to others, engage in thoughtful discussions and demonstrate strong communication skills in all areas of their academic and personal lives;
- Mrs. Schweigert entered her Grade 5/6 and 7/8 classes into the Hyundai Pembroke draw for Lumber Kings hockey tickets. The classes were the lucky winners of the tickers and will get the opportunity to see the Lumber Kings play this season.

INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Business and Corporate Services Committee Report

Anne Haley, Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held October 7, 2024.

Community Use of Schools – An updated summary of scheduled community use of schools from September 2024 to August 2025 was provided as an information item.

Community Use of Schools – Request for Exemption of Rental Fees – A request was received from Katrina Kahn for an exemption of rental fees for the use of the gymnasium at St. Joseph's School, Arnprior to run a health and wellness class for the teachers at St. Joseph's.

RESOLUTION #7

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Dave Howard

That the Board approve the request for an exemption of rental fees for Katrina Kahn for the use of the gymnasium at St. Joseph's School, Arnprior to run a health and wellness class for the teachers at St. Joseph's. Insurance will be paid for by the group.

...Carried

Disruption of School Bus Services in Renfrew County – The Township of McNab/Braeside issued a resolution at their regular council meeting on September 3, 2024 to urge both school boards and the RCJTC to resolve school bus services immediately.

Bob Schreader and Mark Searson will draft a response to the township and send a draft to trustees prior to sending it out.

Trustee Code of Conduct Policy – Mark Searson provided an update on the new Trustee Code of Conduct policy. This policy deals directly with trustees and sets out required components for the code of conduct. The Board has also added a requirement that a trustee respect and support the legal right of Catholic parents to have their children educated in a Catholic elementary and secondary school.

One other change is that if there is an alleged breach of code of conduct, an Integrity Commissioner would check to see if there was a breach. The cost of this investigation would be paid for by the Board.

RESOLUTION #8

Moved by Jerry Lavalley

Seconded by Jeannie Ivory

That the Board approve the revisions to the Trustee Code of Conduct Policy as presented.

...Carried

Educational Services Committee Meeting Report

Committee Chair, Pat O'Grady, reported on the meeting held October 7, 2024.

Presentation – Math Achievement Action Plan – Elizabeth Addicott, the Board's Numeracy Lead SPAT, attended the meeting to provide an update on the Math Achievement Action Plan. She explained that this year's plan is very similar to last year's, with the same three priority actions:

1. Ensuring fidelity of curriculum implementation and use of instructional and assessment practices with a proven track record of enhancing student achievement;
2. Engaging in ongoing learning to strengthen mathematics content knowledge for teaching;
3. Knowing the mathematics learner and ensuring mathematical tasks, interventions and supports are relevant and responsive.

The schools that will be focused on this year are the Grade 6 classes in Holy Name, St. James, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Mary's. Support will continue to be provided to last year's schools, George Vanier and St. Anthony's.

RCCDSB Equity Audit – Last spring, Clint Young indicated that we will be bringing in a consulting firm to look at hiring practices and to do a complete review of our culture. On the October 11th PA Day, there will be a video launch informing all employees of what this entails. The consulting firm will receive all the information from the questionnaire, which will be confidential.

Fall Supervisory Officer Visits 2024-2025 – This was an information item.

LIST (Literacy Intervention Specialist Teacher) Schedule – A schedule was shared on what the LISTs are doing and when they are getting out to the schools. The three teachers are Katherine Brohart, Alicia Nieman and Catherine Searson. Their mandate is to have all the screening done by November 15, 2024.

Edwin Learning Platform Pilot Project – Our schools will have an opportunity to participate in a pilot project involving the Edwin Learning Platform. This project aims to enhance teaching and learning experiences by providing access to a dynamic digital ecosystem to support diverse educational needs. Every school has one license under this pilot project and each school has been invited to nominate one teacher to participate. Feedback is an important part of this project. A system-wide rollout is being planned for later in the school year.

October 11, 2024 PA Day – This was an information item outlining the structure of the PA Day.

EQAO Results – Our Board had exceptional results in the latest EQAO standardized testing. Our average test scores surpassed the provincial average in every subject.

Safe and Inclusive Schools Memo – This was an information item.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Desk Audit – This was an information item.

Special Education Advisory Committee Report

Committee Chair, Susan Artymko, reported on the meeting held October 9, 2024.

Presentation – Dr. Jenny Demark, Clinical Psychologist – Dr. Jenny Demark attended the meeting to discuss the language used by the Ministry. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision (1,050 pages) or the DSM is used by the Ministry as well as medical professionals. It is a comprehensive glossary, description and categorization of mental disorders. The first edition appeared in 1952 with several updates since then. The diagnosis of a mental disorder is a “Controlled Act”. This means that only the members of certain regulated health professions (specifically psychologists, psychiatrists and family doctors) can make a diagnosis of a mental disorder. Although other regulated health professionals such as behaviour analysts, occupational therapists, social workers and psychotherapists often provide treatment to those with a mental disorder, they cannot diagnose them.

Clinicians use the DSM to have clear, consistent and standardized language to use with their clients and their colleagues. This provides consistent and reliable diagnoses to be used in research and gives an accurate diagnosis which is the first step toward planning an appropriate intervention. It also gives a common language to assist in the development of new interventions, including medications and therapy.

One of the many strengths of the DSM is that it is being constantly revised and updated based on current research evidence. It is ever evolving to include updated language and to reflect the available research. The DSM developers listen to community members and integrate current social norms.

Dr. Demark welcomed questions from the committee and provided her website www.childsolutions.ca and her Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/childsolutions> . Any questions can be forwarded to Clint Young and the slideshow will be shared to the committee as well.

AODA Compliance Checklist – An AODA compliance audit was done in July 2024. It mainly dealt with transportation policies and with the help of Justin Jeffrey, RCJTC Manager, the checklist was submitted to the Ministry. Just one clarification was requested from the Ministry, which was good news.

AODA Compliance Letter – A letter from the Ministry stating that the desk audit of our school board was complete and accepted.

October 11, 2024 PA Day – A survey was done with our EAs last year, where they asked for professional development more specific to their roles in the school. On the October 11th PA Day, all staff will be working together in the morning, and in the afternoon, the EAs will have access to virtual live sessions working with the behaviour analysts for data collection and working on a standard supply plan for supply EAs.

EA Re-Allocation – A reallocation process for EAs is done in September, in accordance with the collective agreement. Our Special Education team visits all our schools and they determine whether we've had new students with special needs move into the school, or students with special needs move into another school. The educational assistants may need to be moved to a different school because of this.

Next Meeting Date – Clint Young asked everyone to introduce themselves, as there are several new members on the committee. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Secondary School Report

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

Student Council

- Student Council held the Turkey Bowl and Crockpot Cook-off on October 10th
- Jag Day was held on October 18th for the Grade 8s
- Student Council is preparing to do trash pick up around the school
- Environment Ministers have started a battery drive for the month of October
- Preparations for the Jag Hunt are underway
- Leading up to Halloween, student council is preparing to start selling Jack-O-Grams

Athletics

- This month four of St. Joseph's students made it to EOSSA for golf
- Girls' junior and senior basketball games and practices have started
- Varsity hockey has started
- Senior and junior volleyball season has started as well

Arts

- The Art Minister is helping to prepare for the Coffee House that will take place on November 14

Pastoral

- During this month, pastoral has helped run a food drive and friendship meals

Request for Out-of-Country School Trip

A request was received from Anne Briscoe, a teacher at St. Joseph's High School in Renfrew, to take SJHS students on an educational and cultural study trip to Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris and London in March 2025.

RESOLUTION #9

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Pat O'Grady

That the Board approve the request from Anne Briscoe, Teacher at St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew, to take students to Europe 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

OCSTA Items

Bob Schreader brought the trustees' attention to many of the items received from OCSTA. He asked the trustees to let Nancy Levasseur know if they are attending the OCSTA Catholic Trustees' Seminar in January so she can register them and book rooms.

- Local Government Week October 20-26
- Memo – Bishop Bergie Pilgrims of Hope
- 2025 Catholic Trustees Seminar Registration & Program
- Archbishop Francis Leo to the College of Cardinals
- 2024 POH Short Video Contest Guidelines
- 2024 Ontario CEC Conference Brochure
- October 2024 CEW 2025 – Together in Faith Bulletin
- Memo – Core Funding Consultation 2025-2026
- 2024 Annual Finance Brief Submission

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was received for the meeting.



Chairperson, Renfrew County Catholic
District School Board



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

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November 13, 2024