

**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, September 25, 2023 at 4:45 p.m.

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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 Jerry Lavalley  
Seconded by Bob Schreader  
That Trustees move into In-Camera Committee in Committee of the Whole.

...Carried

**RESOLUTION #2**

Moved by Pat O’Grady  
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 - 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:	Trustee	- Andy Bray

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

### **RESOLUTION #3**

Moved by David Howard  
 Seconded by Pat O'Grady  
 That the Agenda for the September 25, 2023 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 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, August 28, 2023 at 4:45 p.m. be approved.

...Carried

## **DISBURSEMENT LIST**

### **RESOLUTION #5**

Moved by Anne Haley  
 Seconded by Jerry Lavalley  
 That the listing of payments as shown on SEP2 be approved as presented.

...Carried

## **PRESENTATION**

### **Demographic Student Data Census Results & Next Steps**

Pam Dickerson, Kylie Gibson and Clint Young were welcomed to the meeting to present the results of the demographic student data census that was conducted last Fall, and what the next steps will be.

Pam explained that last year every board in Ontario was asked to complete the census, which is mandated by Ontario's Anti-Racism Act and is part of the province's Education Equity Action Plan. The aim is to enable boards to more clearly identify and address barriers to student success. Boards had to comply with data standards that provided rules and guidance for the collection, analysis and use of the voluntary demographic

data in four categories: Indigenous identity, race, ethnic origin and religion. Boards had to follow the format provided but had some leeway in making the census a bit more board-oriented.

Kylie advised that, given the low participation rate for elementary students, we will be re-launching the census for K-8. Kindergarten to Grade 6 students will complete the census at home as they did last year, and Grade 7-8 students will complete it in class. The census information is completely confidential and participants can choose to opt out completely or to not answer particular questions. A video and infographic will be sent out between September 25<sup>th</sup> and October 5<sup>th</sup> with parental consent to be received between October 10<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup>. The re-launch will take place between October 23<sup>rd</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>.

The secondary participation rate was about 70%, with only 17% participation in elementary. Certain barriers to participation were realized during the process and by removing some of them, the team is hopeful that we will have more success in the elementary grades. Instead of reaching out to students' email, the information will be sent directly to parents' email and the importance of the census will be emphasized more clearly. The timing of the census will also be taken into account, recognizing that it was done last Fall during hunting season in Renfrew County, which may have affected participation.

Clint added that we have learned a lot about statistics in this journey and that some statistics can be skewed to a certain group or population due to the small number of participants. We also learned that we need to gather results by school so we can pull student and census data together and so this time, we will be asking parents for the school their child attends.

Pam noted that she and Clint attended a seminar this past May and they learned that other boards experienced the same participation for elementary as we did.

The team is in the process of creating a video that will give a lighter approach to presenting the data and will be using it as an opportunity to re-launch the census for the elementary grades. The draft video was provided in the trustees' folder and some of the video was shown at the meeting. The video summarizes the secondary data that was collected from the census that was done last Fall.

Boards are also mandated to follow up with a written report on the data collected, the analysis of the data and action items that will be taken from the analysis. The hope is to have this report completed before Christmas.

In response to a question about how Grade 7-8 students will complete the census confidentially in class, Clint explained that students will be allotted time in class and that it will be set up as if it's an exam.

For the Kindergarten to Grade 6 students who will be doing the census at home, if any families have internet barriers, the Board will provide opportunities for them to access the school's internet.

It was also explained that even if students did the survey last year, they will need to do it again this year so that the data is coming from the one data set. They realize there is still a barrier for families with multiple children as they will need to do the census for each child. Clint explained that they have tried to find a way for it to be done one per family but it is not possible.

Parents of the Grade 7-8 students will be sent a consent form through school messenger. They will only respond if they do not want their child to participate. It was explained that it is easier to track this way and that this is the format other boards are using. It is more important to know who will not be doing the census.

Educational Assistants will be available to provide support for special education students if assistance is needed and parents can be contacted if high needs students require their help.

Bob Schreader thanked Pam, Kylie and Clint for all the work, time and energy they have put into preparing and implementing the student census. He said that the video is very well done and that it should create a lot of interest. Clint noted that Kylie has worked very hard on the video and is getting a lot of footage of our students and our schools.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Retirements**

#### **RESOLUTION #6**

Moved by David Howard

Seconded by Anne Haley

That the Board accept with regret the retirement of Brenda MacMullin, Lead Hand Caretaker at Bishop Smith Catholic High School, Pembroke, effective November 30, 2023.

...Carried

Dave Howard asked how this impacts our caretaking and Mary Lynn Schauer replied that we are still struggling. Brenda is very capable and a hard worker and she will be difficult to replace.

## **GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS**

### **Renfrew/Westmeath Schools**

Susan Artymko, local trustee, reported on activities taking place in the Board's Madawaska Schools.

#### **St. John Bosco, Barry's Bay**

- St. John Bosco students participated in the Terry Fox Walk/Run on Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> and this year's event was even more special as they had the

opportunity to virtually join Fred Fox, Terry's older brother, before they went out on the run; an incredible experience for the students;

- At the end of the 2022-23 school year, Aaron Parcher, former SJB Grade 1-2 teacher, and Graham O'Marra, Grade 2-3 teacher, launched a science project about climate change. Mr. Parcher was inspired by the book "Paddle to the Sea" by Holling Clancy Holling, and students launched their boats with an environmental slogan and sent them down the Madawaska River. The boats were made with biodegradable materials and students predicted where the boats would end up based on the currents in the river. In August of 2023, Mr. Parcher received an email from Hilton Head Island in South Carolina with pictures of one of the students' boats advising that they had re-launched the boat into the Atlantic Ocean, hoping the current will bring it to Africa. A unique and fun learning opportunity for students

#### George Vanier, Combermere

- Students have had a great start to the new school year, with spirit days, fundraisers and engaging in learning, and are excited to be back in the classroom.
- Students were also thrilled to participate in the "wear your favourite colour from head to toe" day!

#### St. Andrew's, Killaloe

- St. Andrew's has had some staffing changes for the 2023-24 school year, including a new principal, Katie Edwards-Ethier; the school welcomes back all new and returning staff
- Students received 59 new Chromebooks and the school is able to provide each student with either a Chromebook or an iPad to use at school
- The school had updates to their heating and cooling systems over the summer and now have air conditioning in all rooms and new ceiling tiles were also installed;
- The school has had many spirit days so far; the first of the year was Summer Sports Day;
- The book fair took place the week of September 18<sup>th</sup>;
- The school held a Fun Fair on September 21<sup>st</sup>, with inflatables, Little Rays Reptiles show, cotton candy, the Toy Bus, snow cones and hot dogs, making it a wonderful community evening; the school thanks all of their very generous sponsors and volunteers who made this such a fun night
- The school held their Terry Fox Run day on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, and thanks everyone who made donations to this worthy cause

Bob Schreder noted the new format for the media release and extended thanks to Kylie Gibson, saying it looks very professional.

## **INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS**

### **Business and Corporate Services Committee Report**

Dave Howard, Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held September 11, 2023.

***Community Use of Schools Fee Waiver Request*** – A request was received from the OLL volleyball group to waive the rental fees for the use of the gymnasium at Our Lady of Lourdes School on Thursday evenings. The group consists of retired staff from the Board.

#### **RESOLUTION #7**

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Pat O’Grady

That the Board approve the Our Lady of Lourdes Volleyball Group’s request for a waiver of rental fees for their use of the gymnasium at Our Lady of Lourdes School, Pembroke, on Thursday evenings, with the understanding that insurance will be paid by the group.

...Carried

***Plant Projects*** – Ian Byce, Manager of Plant Services, provided an update on the work the plant department has been working on over the summer. Trustees asked for clarification about the property lines of the property next door to the Board Office and Ian will follow up on the lot lines.

***Community Use of Schools*** – A Community Use of Schools summary to-date for the 2023-2024 school year was provided.

***Update on Ventilation Systems*** – Ian Byce provided an update as follows:

- Our Lady of Grace ventilation project was completed during March Break; an automation system was also added so that the school equipment operating status and space temperatures can be viewed remotely;
- St. Andrew’s had a new heating/air conditioning system installed over the summer;
- Other projects include the 25KW generators with automatic transfer switch in five schools (OLG, St. Michael’s, George Vanier, St. Joseph’s, Calabogie, St. Andrew’s). When power goes out in the rural areas, they can now be automatically switched to a generator which can give them limited power for basic necessities such as running water. Work to be completed in the 23/24 school year;
- Work at Bishop Smith CHS was completed over the summer to accommodate the transfer of the Grade 7 students from the Pembroke/Petawawa family of schools. The basketball court at Bishop is complete; waiting on the backboards to finish the exterior work.

## **Educational Services Committee Meeting Report**

Anne Haley, Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held September 11, 2023.

**Presentation – Math Achievement & Action Plan** – Elizabeth Addicott and Katherine McLaughlin provided an overview of last year’s journey as a team as they focused on foundational learning, documents, practices and strategies. Mathematics for All is getting back to the basics and focusing on math teaching with our math tool kits. A real focus was made on removing barriers for all students. Each school team was asked to choose a “student of mystery”, which is a student not yet responding to instruction from the teacher. Elizabeth would model a math lesson with a whole class, using math games and materials. For this school year, the math achievement action plan set out by the Ministry of Education aligns with a lot of the work already done last year by the Board. Four of our schools – George Vanier, Combermere; St. James, Eganville; St. Anthony’s, Chalk River; and St. Mary’s, Deep River, were chosen because of their EQAO math scores last year. Elizabeth has spent a lot of time in these four schools working directly with teachers and students to provide a framework for them to work with.

**Renfrew County Regional Science & Technology Fair** – The RCRSTF has requested that the Board sponsor the Science & Technology Fair as in previous years.

### **RESOLUTION #8**

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Dave Howard

That the Board donate \$1,500. in support of the 2024 Renfrew County Regional Science & Technology Fair.

...Carried

**EOCCC September Newsletter** – This was an information item. It was noted that our Board had three teachers involved in the writing projects for EOCCC this year.

**Memo – Blended Learning Classrooms** – This was an information item.

**Memo – Arts Reporting for Music & Dance** – This memo explained the guidelines for Music and Dance teachers on how and when to prepare report cards.

**Memo – Music & Dance Schedule for 2023-2024** – Information only.

**Memo – Music & Dance Teachers PD Day** – Because of a significant turnover in our music and dance teachers, T.J. O’Grady organized the PD activities for the Board’s seven music and dance teachers.

**RCCDSB Provided Resources & Research Based Programs for Language, Mathematics, Coding and Other Subject Areas** – During the earlier math presentation, Liz Addicott referred to some of the math resources that were made

available to teachers. This list is one way for our educators to have access to these resources before school starts.

***Supporting Transgender & Gender Diverse Students*** – This document was created a few years ago for Board staff and admin thought it would be a good time to share it again with the trustees. Safety is of the utmost importance for all our students and it is felt that this document honours the Human Rights Code. This was also distributed at the LTM as a reminder for our principals and vice-principals.

***Memo – Ontario Preparing Students for Success*** – Information item.

***Memo – Revised Grade 1-8 Language Curriculum*** – Information item.

***Memo – Revisions to Social Studies*** – Information item.

***PPM168 – Reading Instruction and Early Reading Screening*** – The Ministry has given school boards some clarity as there was a delayed implementation of the reading screener for students in kindergarten to Grade 2. Our Board needs to be in compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Right to Read. If our schools were using reading screening tools last year, then continuing to do so has been the message that we've sent them.

***Letter from Stephen Lecce to Ontario Parents*** – This was an information item. This letter was sent out to our parents and posted on our website.

***Memo – New Computer Studies Course*** – The Ministry announced that all Grade 9 students need to have a compulsory course in tech. We are waiting on information from the Ministry on how this will be unveiled. Some questions the Board has are: what will be the requirements to teach this course; do they need a red seal; and is a certain type of classroom required. There has been no further information from the Ministry regarding this announcement.

### **Special Education Advisory Committee Report**

Pat O'Grady, Committee Chair, reported on the meeting held September 13, 2023.

***Special Education Staff 2023-2024*** – Clint Young welcomed everyone back after the summer. Transportation issues were discussed and the Committee was told that no special education students are being affected.

Kelly Etmanskie was the principal of this summer's Summer Transition Program. A total of 250 students participated in some sort of a transition program to welcome them to either a new school or return to the same school. If the Ministry provides money again next year, we will offer something similar in regard to transitioning to a new school.

There were some changes over the summer in regard to staff. Julia Graydon is now the School Effectiveness Principal as Scott Nichol is now the new principal at St. Joseph's High School in Renfrew. Some staff are leaving, including Melissa Jane (speech and language pathologist) who is leaving in September. We have been very fortunate to hire



a qualified replacement for her – Christina McLean. Whitney Weiss is on maternity leave for the year and a job posting is currently out for this temporary position. Emily Brennan is on maternity leave as well and Kate Desbien is replacing her until the early spring.

**Changes for 2023-2024** – The Board has a new Deaf and Hard of Hearing & Accessibility teacher. Angela Bergeron is currently a Valleycrest teacher, but she has been released to assist deaf and hard of hearing students. We have received funds tied to Accessibility and she will cover this role as well.

An Itinerant EA has been hired for each family of schools. Because of the difficulty in replacing daily absences, these EAs will respond to daily absence calls and also provide short term supports for their respective family of schools.

A SERT Professional Development Day will be held on September 19<sup>th</sup> for the first time in four years. SERTS will meet at St. James, Eganville to learn about IEP development and will receive BMS training in the afternoon.

**Letter from DPCDSB SEAC to Minister of Education** – This letter to the Minister discusses the need for more educational assistant support. It is a call to the Minister that if we are making children with special needs a priority, we need to make the workers for these children a priority also. The Committee recommended that our SEAC write a similar letter and present it at our next Board meeting.

**Meeting Format – Discussion** – After some discussion, it was agreed that the meeting time will be changed to 7:00 p.m. Clint Young will look into the policies and procedures for SEAC and will follow up at the next meeting.

**Future Presentations – Discussion** – Ideas for future presentations are always welcome and it was noted that it's often easier for Board employees to give a presentation on what's going on in our schools. Some ideas put forward are: Algonquin College program for ASD students, Ottawa Valley Community Connections, Primary Educators and Community Living. If anyone has an idea for a presentation, they are asked to contact Clint Young.

**Association Reports** – There were no Association reports.

**Next Meeting Date** – Wednesday, October 11, 2023 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**

- Spirit Week was held the week of September 18-22, with dress up days that included Barbie, Country vs Country Club and Student Teacher Swap; Friday's spirit day included activities like dunking a teacher and selling popcorn and cotton candy;

- The Terry Fox Run was held September 21<sup>st</sup>, with over \$1,000 raised for cancer research

### Athletics

- The girls basketball teams have been chosen as well as the boys volleyball; games should start in the next two weeks;
- The golf team had a tournament on September 19<sup>th</sup> and Abbie Miller came in first and is headed to EOSSA this spring

### Pastoral

- The Catholic Women's League recently held a community friendship meal at Fatima

### **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 to Europe in March 2024. They are planning to go to Italy, Austria and Germany during the March Break.

### **RESOLUTION #7**

Moved by Anne Haley

Seconded by Susan Artymko

That the Board approve the request from Anne Briscoe, Teacher at St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew, 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 highlighted a number of the items received from OCSTA.

- 2023-2024 OCSTA Membership Fees & FACE Levy
- Invoice for 2023-2024 GSN Funding for Central Bargaining
- 2023-2024 Short Video Contest for CDSB Students
- Letter re: Police Check Submission
- Whoever Wishes to Follow Me – On The Road Together Reflection
- Reminder – Contest for 2024 Catholic Education Week Song
- Save the Dates – Catholic Trustees' Seminar (January 19-20) and AGM & Conference (May 2-4)
- Draft Regulations under Bill 98 – Better Schools & Student Outcomes Act

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Sept. 13/23 - card of thanks from Bob Sheppard & family for the Board's expression of sympathy sent at the passing of their son.

## **FUTURE BUSINESS**

### **General/Trustees' Comments**

Mark Searson reminded the trustees about the LT Retreat and the dinner invitation on Wednesday evening. He asked them to fill out their meal orders and to let Nancy Levasseur know as well if they are attending.

Jerry Lavalley said that he is still trying to coordinate a date to meet with the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Council.

Bob Schreader asked that trustees look at the census video provided in tonight's presentation and to contact Clint Young if they have any suggestions prior to its release.

### **Meeting Dates**

- |            |   |  |
|------------|---|--|
| October 11 | - | Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting<br>6:00 p.m. – Virtual Meeting        |
| October 16 | - | Business & Corporate Services Committee Meeting<br>4:00 p.m. – Board Office        |
| October 16 | - | Educational Services Committee Meeting<br>Following BCS Meeting – Board Office     |
| October 30 | - | Board Meeting- Committee of the Whole – 4:00 p.m.<br>- General Meeting – 4:45 p.m. |

### **RESOLUTION #8**

Moved by Pat O'Grady  
Seconded by Jerry Lavalley

That the recommendations made by motion and consensus in the Committee of the Whole Meeting of September 25, 2023 be approved.

...Carried

### **RESOLUTION #9**

Moved by Dave Howard  
Seconded by Susan Artymko  
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