



"Accepting the Challenge"

# Education Committee Minutes

Monday, November 9, 2009 – 1:30 p.m.

Board Room, Administration Office

Present: B. Jolly, G. Buri (Alternate), Dr. D. Michaels

Regrets: P. Bartlette, R. Coey.

## 1. CALL TO ORDER:

In the absence of Trustee Coey, Trustee Jolly assumed the position of Chairperson and called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

## 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Education Committee Agenda was approved as circulated.

## 3. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

NIL

## 4. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE MATTERS

### A) Standing Tall Presentation – Timed Event(1:30 – 2:00) – P. Sayies

Patti Sayies, the Manitoba Métis Federation Inc.'s Provincial Coordinator for the Standing Tall program spoke to the Committee about the program. She noted the program was currently run in two middle years school sites in Winnipeg with four employees. She provided the history of the program, noting it had originally started in New Zealand where Aboriginal students were dealing with many of the same problems as Aboriginal students in Manitoba. She spoke about the Tu Tangata program; the research and data collected to date as a result of the success of the program. Ms. Sayies spoke about the five project goals which included: preserving and enhancing Aboriginal culture; increasing Grade 8 completion rates and encouraging completion of Grade 12 for Aboriginal students; encouraging participation of Aboriginal youth in post-secondary education; assisting Aboriginal parents to make the transition into school and/or training for employment; and promoting the involvement of the Aboriginal community in education and training initiatives. Ms. Sayies also reviewed the key elements of the program which included the importance of trained project staff; the Learning Nest; the involvement of the Community, parents and cultural components. She concluded her presentation by noting the impact the program had on all stakeholders including the students, parents, staff and community at large. Acting Chairperson, Mrs. Jolly, thanked Ms. Sayies for her presentation. The Committee asked questions for clarification including how the project is funded; how role models are recruited; if the MMF is interested in branching out into other communities with this project; if Ms. Sayies works with the local MMF in Brandon; and what would be required from the school division should a partnership be formed.

Ms. Sayies exited the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

The Committee discussed Ms. Sayies' presentation and it was agreed that the Standing Tall program was a very good program although possibly a very expensive one. The Committee directed Senior Administration to look at what is currently being done in the Division in this regard and to postpone any further discussions until after the Board has made their final decisions regarding the Single Track French Immersion School.

**B) Welcome to Kindergarten – Timed Event (2:00 – 2:30) – B. Wedlake**

Brenda Wedlake, Program Manager, The Learning Partnership, spoke to the Education Committee regarding the “Welcome to Kindergarten” program. She began her presentation by providing a brief history about The Learning Partnership and her role as Program Manager for the “Welcome to Kindergarten” program. Ms. Wedlake provided background information on the “Welcome to Kindergarten” program. She noted the training that would be provided to school teams early in the New Year; highlighted the importance of the welcome event that would be held in the spring; reviewed the contents of the “Welcome to Kindergarten” bag and its purpose; as well as the follow-up that would be completed in the fall. Ms. Wedlake also addressed other items that could be supplied to schools such as a reference guide on how to approach a possible school partner, “My Story” scrapbook, and music CD. Ms. Wedlake confirmed that should the Brandon School Division be interested in a possible pilot project for the 2010/2011 school year she would need to be advised by the end of November. Acting Chairperson, Mrs. Jolly, thanked Ms. Wedlake for her presentation. The Committee asked questions for clarification including the cost of each kit; whether or not the individual schools could add items to the kit; and the availability of possible funding.

Ms. Wedlake exited the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

The Committee discussed Ms. Wedlake’s presentation noting it appeared to be a very worthwhile program. It was noted that the only cost to the Division would be the \$25.00 per bag for the program as all other costs are funded by The Learning Partnership.

**Agreed:** The Education Committee agreed to ask the Finance Committee to set aside \$2,500 for the Welcome to Kindergarten Program as a possible budget enhancement for the 2010/2011 budget deliberations.

**Recommendation:** That the Welcome to Kindergarten program be implemented as a pilot project for the 2010/2011 school year in a school to be selected by Senior Administration.

**C) MSBA Workshop Proposals – 2010 Convention**

The Committee discussed the possible workshop proposals referred to the Committee by the Board of Trustees, including the following: Religious Diversity pamphlet; Neelin High School Off-Campus; Aboriginal Education at Brandon School Division and the work of the Native Elder; and the work of the Drug and Alcohol Coalition. Trustee Buri asked the Committee to also consider the possibility of Mr. Don Cuggy’s presentation regarding incorporating graphic novels into classroom literacy. A discussion was held and it was agreed the Committee would forward two possible workshop proposals.

**Agreed:** The Education Committee agreed to forward the topics of the Neelin High School Off-Campus and Aboriginal Education at Brandon School Division and the work of the Native Elder noting that if only one topic was allowed, the Committee would recommend the work of the Native Elder as the Brandon School Division is unique in this respect.

**D) Follow-up to Vancouver Conference on Gifted and Talented Education**

This matter was deferred to the next Committee meeting for discussion.

**5. BRIEFINGS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION**

- “Thinking Differently” – Recommendations for 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Board/Superintendent Leadership, Governance, and Teamwork for High Student Achievement was deferred until next meeting.
- The Learning Partnership Papers, Fall 2009 issue was deferred until next meeting.

6. **OPERATIONS INFORMATION**

7. **NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Monday, December 14, 2009, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., Board Room.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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R. Coey, Chair

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P. Bartlette

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B. Jolly

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G. Buri (Alternate)