Parent/Guardian/Division Advisory Committee

Wednesday, February 15, 2012 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Room, Administration Office

BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION
"Accepting the Challenge"

Present:
Trustees Kevan Sumner, Pat Bowslaugh, Jim Murray, and Glen Kruck; Dr. Donna Michaels, Superintendent; Barb Miller, Principal Representative, Alexander School

Lori Nickel, Betty Gibson School Parent; Cheryl Peturssen, New Era School Parent; Wanda Brine, Earl Oxford School Parent; Jo-Ann Pasklivich-Holder, St. Augustine School Parent; Karen Slawinsky, École Harrison Parent; Mel Tallant-Townsend, Green Acres Parent; Shauna Hewitt-Michta, Waverly Park Parent; Robert Pilloud, Kirkcaldy Heights Parent

Regrets:
Kevin Zabowski, Secretary-Treasurer;Sandra Couling; Alexander School Parent; Sandra Koch-Gensiorek, Crocus Plains Parent; Nancy Kolesar, Linden Lanes Parent; Candace Hildebrand, Meadows Parent;

1. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA AND OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Trustee Bowslaugh.

2. REVIEW OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 16, 2011 AND BUSINESS ARISING

The Committee minutes of November 16, 2011 were reviewed. The following items were added to the agenda; arising from the November 16, 2011 meeting:

a) Correction: Clarification sought as to where cola drinks were being sold. Dr. Michaels indicated that the senior high schools are not selling such in machines but are selling energy drinks containing sugar. Jo-Ann Pasklivich-Holder circulated current pictures of colas being stocked in the three high schools. Dr. Michaels will direct senior high principals to remove these beverages to comply with Policy 4031.
b) Following items raised for follow-up report: Off Site Activities; Parent Handbook, Dress Code, Policy 4044, Nutrition Policy.
New Items added: distribution of minutes, private sponsorship in schools, enrollment form recently distributed, expected fall enrollment.
c) Off Site School Activities
    a. Trustee Kruck referenced the report from Kevin Zabowski to Board of Trustees (December 7, 2012) regarding the availability of senior high equity funds for extracurricular activities. He requested that the report be distributed with these minutes. Please see Appendix A.
d) Dress Code
The issue was reviewed. Dr. Michaels advised that the MHSAA's constitution regulates the dress code of athletes. Two lengths of shorts for volleyball are available. It is the coach and players who decide upon the length of the shorts. MHSAA operates an independent, autonomous body whose constitution prevails over local school division jurisdictions re: dresscode. In depth discussion ensued as to possible follow up. In these minutes of November 16, 2011, it was recommended by the senior high principals that the Board of Trustees write a letter to the MHSAA Board of Directors addressing

the concerns of clothing and how the short sorts violate the School Division's dress code for students as stated in the Policy on Student Conduct.

e) Parent Handbook
Trustee Kruck inquired as to the status of the sub-committee's work. Dr. Michaels advised that there was a delay in the appointment of a principal to the committee. This would occur prior to the April 18, 2012 meeting.

f) Policy 4044 – "Appropriate Educational Programming"
Trustee Kruck inquired as to the distribution of this policy document to committee members. Dr. Michaels advised that it is available on the Brandon School Division web site and is in the schools' policy manuals. It was agreed that hard copies would be available upon request.

g) Distribution of Minutes and Agenda
Clarification was sought by Trustee Kruck as to how the minutes and agenda are distributed. It was noted that the items are emailed to participants. It was requested that a separate trustee folder be set up as part of the Division Futures committee for better trustee access to agenda and minutes.

h) Parent Teacher Student Conferences
In response to Mr.Tallant-Townsend's inquiry as to why teachers are allowed two days for parent/teacher/student conferences Dr. Michaels advised that the days are set as part of the provincial school calendar schedule.

3. PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENTS - PRESENTATION

Trustee Sumner introduced Mr. Bryce Wilson, Manager of Recreation Development Community Services, City of Brandon. Mr. Sumner invited Mr. Wilson, as a resource person to address the latest designs of playground development.

Mr. Wilson spoke to the changes in playground design and structure; emphasizing the importance of the current "Nature Playscape" (as can be seen at Assiniboine Park). Key features include the inclusion of water, sand, rocks, trees, shrubs, flowers, hills, tunnels. He circulated pictures of this most recent design and structure and provided a detailed explanation of the benefits of this model. It is designed "to get kids active" with nature's elements. Problem solving is an important aspect of this design. Cost is about $200,000.00 with specialized features – e.g. "pirate ship". Features can also include "oodle swings". This feature can be adapted for children with physical disabilities (e.g. City of Regina). This "Nature Playscape" is being planned for Rideau Park. Thematic displays are possible – e.g. Trees "carved" as frogs. "It is an amazing place for everyone. Ideal for family outings." Discussions ensued regarding the advantages, costs, benefits to students. Trustee Bowslaugh thanked Mr. Wilson for his excellent contribution to the meeting.

4. PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP IN SCHOOLS

Trustee Sumner raised this matter to obtain parental response to this matter. He explained that the Policy Review Committee is in the process of considering this matter. Currently private sponsorship is visible on many supplies and machines in schools.
Perspective expressed:

- Acceptable for private sponsorship of school's score clocks if they are provided through donations. Such give students opportunities.
- Currently parent donations support activities together with corporate donations.
- Blatant corporate sponsorship in schools is unacceptable.
- Current sponsorship of initiative such as playground is evident.

Trustee Bowslaugh invited parents to provide input, suggestions to Trustee Sumner.

5. REGISTRATION FORM K-8

Rob Pilloud, Kirkcaldy Heights Parent, enquired about the updating of the school registration form. It's frustrating that the same information is being given annually and not being recorded accurately. It was advised that parents with such concerns should contact the school secretary directly. Dr. Michaels advised that the matter will be addressed with senior administration.

6. EXPECTED INCREASE IN ENROLMENT AND CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR SEPTEMBER 2012

Wanda Brine, Earl Oxford parent, raised this matter; enquiring what the Brandon School Division is doing to address the matter. What is the status of the portables requested? Trustee Sumner spoke to the necessity not the desirability of portables. Trustee Murray spoke to the necessity and advantages of portables. Trustee Bowslaugh advised as to the respective actions being taken and in place to address this matter. These included current in-depth study of enrolment growth and facility requirements, discussions with the Minister of Education, Deputy Minister of Education and a close monitoring of current enrollment growths. Dr. Michaels advised that the projected enrolment for September 2012 is a conservative estimate of 100 students. Anticipated for September 2014 is an addition of 400 children (Maple Leaf recruitment). Trustees Sumner and Murray provided additional information regarding the use of requested portables and the request for an new school. Discussion ensued regarding the challenges and realities of increasing enrolment. This included the impact of forthcoming legislation re: K-3 cap of 20 students per class. Questions related to the conversion of current spaces to classroom were posed. (E.g. Conversion of the old gymnasium space at Earl Oxford to classroom space. This space currently houses the B. J. Hales Collection – crated and in storage) Concerns were expressed related to the changes in catchment areas and the impact on children and families.

7. REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES 4031 – LUNCH PROGRAM

Trustee Sumner indicated that Policy and Procedure 4031 is under review at the Board Policy Review Committee. This matter is to be addressed in details at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Bowslaugh thanked everyone for their active participation and welcomed input.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

9. NEXT REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING – 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 18, 2012, Board Room, Administration Office.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Sumner

P. Bowslaugh

Appendix A

BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

MEMO

DATE: December 7, 2011

TO: Brandon School Division Board of Trustees

FROM: Kevin Zabowski, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

RE: Senior High Equity Funds for Extracurricular Activities

The purpose of this memo is to address Trustee Glen Kruck's inquiry of November 14, 2011 regarding how the senior high equity funds for extracurricular activities are being communicated to staff, students and parents and how students and parents can apply for funding.

Communication Process

The three high school Principals are currently communicating the availability of the Senior High Equity Funds for Extracurricular Activities in similar ways. The Principals are advising their staff, coaches, counsellors and program leaders prior to the start of the activity's season that they should contact them if they are aware of any students that are unable to pay the associated fees. This communication is being done verbally and through follow up emails to the staff directly from the Principal. The availability of the funds is also communicated at various activity information evening meetings with the parents and student. For example, the coaches at Crocus Plains and Vincent Massey inform students and parents that a financial hardship will not prevent a student from playing a sport and that mechanisms are in place to allow these students to participate. In addition, student needs are monitored throughout the year.

Once a student has been identified as needing support, the staff member meets with the Principal or Vice Principal to discuss the financial issue. It is at these meetings that the amount of student support funding for the extracurricular activity is determined.

Application Process

The current process for distributing the funds at each high school is virtually the same. Each Principal is advised by a teacher, coach or supervisor of the student or family's financial need. The Principal then assesses and works through the process to support the student. This process is always done discretely and by respecting the confidentiality of the student and parent.

Conclusion

Each High School Principal has advised that the availability of the funds is presently being communicated and that they have processes in place for the distribution of the extracurricular funds. Furthermore, there has been discussion at the Policy Review Committee to include the communication process for the availability of the funds in Policy 4001 - Offsite Activities.

BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION