Education Committee Minutes

Thursday, December 8, 2011, 11:30 a.m.
Board Room, Administration Office

Present: P. Bartlette (Chairperson), P. Bowslaugh, D. Karnes Dr. D. Michaels.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Education Committee Meeting was called to order at 11:35 a.m. by the Chairperson, Trustee Bartlette.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as circulated.

3. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Committee received the Minutes of November 17, 2011 without comment.

4. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

NIL

5. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE MATTERS

A) Policy Development - (Timed Event)

Ms. Teresa Timmerman, Numeracy Specialist, attended the meeting to speak to the Committee about draft Policy 4059 – "Numeracy". Ms. Timmerman confirmed no other Division in Manitoba has such a policy and therefore the development of this policy by the Brandon School Division puts the Division in a leadership position. She confirmed early numeracy success leads to later academic success. Ms. Timmerman than spoke to how the 21st Century research and thinking currently defines numeracy. She noted the policy contained the statement of Board support and core beliefs. She highlighted the statements of best practice and the role of the Numeracy Specialist in promoting those best practices. She confirmed one of the main roles of the Numeracy Specialist was to communicate the same numeracy message throughout the Division. Following Ms. Timmerman's presentation discussions were held regarding the importance of ownership by all staff members, and structured professional development for each of early and middle years. The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the Numeracy Policy to the Board of Trustees.

Recommendation:
That Policy 4059 – "Numeracy" is hereby approved.

B) MSBA Convention 2012

The Committee reviewed the Manitoba School Boards Association correspondence referred to the Committee regarding workshop proposals for the 2012 Convention. The Committee deferred to Senior Administration for a possible recommendation. Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, noted the Board's work regarding equity, particularly in the area of social justice and fundamental fairness. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that Dr. Michaels, Superintendent would prepare a proposal, on behalf of the Brandon School Division, regarding equity.

Discussions regarding the Premier Award for school innovation was briefly discussed. Possible suggestions included the Off-Campus program; Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School's partnership with Habitat for Humanity; and the new Environmental Science program offered at Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School. Senior Administration noted other possible suggestions could include the following: Empowered reading program; Grade 8 and 9 Transition; Middle Year Literacy support; and the partnership with the Brandon Regional Health Authority to place teen clinics in the three high schools. As further discussion was required, the Committee agreed to defer this item to the next regular meeting of the Committee. The Committee also directed Senior Administration to ask school principals for their suggestions on possible programs which could be submitted for this award.

6. BRIEFINGS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION

The following was received as information:

- Information regarding Treadmills in the classroom, referred to Committee from Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee meeting held October 11, 2011.
- *What is the Future of Learning in Canada?* (Canadian Council on Learning, October 2011

7. OPERATIONS INFORMATION

Trustee Bowslaugh noted the Rotary Club had received a grant to provide personalized books to students in the Brandon School Division. A discussion was held regarding the request for personal information and the Division's responsibility to follow the Privacy legislation. It was noted that the books could be gifted to the students, without the personalized information.

8. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, January 12, 2012, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Board Room.

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Bartlette, Chair	P. Bowslaugh
D. Karnes	K. Sumner (Alternate)

Appendix A

BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION
POLICY

DRAFT

POLICY 4059

NUMERACY

Adopted: -- DRAFT #6a – (April 15, 2011)

The Board of Trustees believes that schools are foundational and essential to the democratic schooling and public education of all students. Inherent within this belief is the understanding that at the heart of democratic schooling is the development of students' numeracy knowledge and skills. Numeracy education is the basis for any effort to strengthen Canada's position as a knowledge-based society. Socially constructed knowledge and learning drives schools to incorporate critical and alternative literacies into the classroom.

Currently, 21st Century research and thinking defines numeracy as:

- having the ability to recognize the mathematical demands and possibilities in a situation;
- knowing how math can be used to solve an authentic problem and using mathematical skills to do so;
- feeling competent and confident in one's own ability to draw on the necessary knowledge and apply it in new and relevant ways to make well-founded judgments; and
- determining solutions that meet the needs of the current circumstance, as well as future situations.

Numeracy is an aggregate of skills, knowledge, beliefs, habits of mind, communication capabilities, and problem-solving strategies that people need in order to engage effectively and autonomously in quantitative situations arising in life. Numerate individuals are interested in making mathematical judgments and conclusions as constructive, concerned and reflective citizens.

The Board of Trustees provides direction and resources to enhance and support quality instruction and learning opportunities for all students, specifically including the area of Numeracy.[1]

The Board has clearly expressed its core beliefs as related to assessment, evaluation and reporting on student learning and achievement.[2]

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[1] Policy 1001.1: *Equity*
[2] Policy 4052: *Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting of Student Learning and Achievement*

To emphasize the commitment to the Brandon School Division Instructional Cycle and the comprehensive definition of Numeracy, the following best practices for Numeracy are:

- The recruitment and retention of a Numeracy Specialist to guide the creation of pertinent, effective, and future-focused Board Policy and Procedures in the field of Numeracy.
- The facilitation and transfer of information up, down, and across the organization as it pertains to curriculum development, effective content delivery techniques, and curriculum evaluations.
- The intentional and timely use of technology to promote conceptual understanding, real world applications and simulations, synthesis of mathematical topics and mathematically sound, authentic, communication.
- The comprehensive and ongoing collection and analysis of data which is shared with students, teachers, principals, superintendents, parents, and the Board in a timely manner to inform these stakeholders regarding achievement trends, effectiveness of change as it relates to cost, programming and resource allocation decisions.

Through the position of Numeracy Specialist[3] the Board of Trustees speaks to the following:

1. Communicating Board Policies regarding assessment, evaluation, and reporting of student learning and achievement specific to Numeracy within Brandon School Division.
2. Proposing recommended changes specific to policy and procedures surrounding Numeracy within Brandon School Division.
3. Supporting school principals in maintaining up to date Best Practices within each building in Brandon School Division.
4. Advocating for opportunities for forward thinking toward future equipment needs within Brandon School Division.
5. Supporting all teachers within Numeracy programs, but specifically teachers new to the profession or to the Brandon School Division.
6. Supporting teachers who are introducing or evaluating new programs within Numeracy in Brandon School Division.
7. Proposing new collaborative approaches to Numeracy, utilizing skills and resources of other specialists (Technology, Literacy).

At every level of numeracy instruction the foundation is to be based upon constant feedback to the students and identified professional development for teachers and numeracy teams.

[3] Policy 6035: *Learning Support Services: Numeracy Specialist K-12*