



"Accepting the Challenge"

## **Divisional Futures & Community Relations Committee Minutes**

Monday, December 12, 2011 – 11:30 a.m.  
Board Room, Administration office

Present: P. Bowslaugh (Chairperson),  
K. Sumner, Dr. D. Michaels.

Regrets: J. Murray

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### **1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 a.m. by the Chairperson, Trustee Bowslaugh.

### **3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was amended to include several other items Trustee Bowslaugh wished to bring forward should time permit. The agenda was approved as amended.

### **4. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee reviewed the Minutes of the meeting held November 2, 2011.

### **5. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS**

NIL

### **6. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

#### **A) Policy 1008 – "Communications"**

The Committee reviewed revised Policy 1008 – "Communications". It was noted the "General Electorate" should be added as a further constituent to cover the public at large. Senior Administration was directed to draft a new paragraph to include the general taxpayer. It was agreed to recommend approval of the revised policy, with the proposed changes, to the Board of Trustees. (Appendix "A" and "B") It was further agreed that should the budget proposal regarding a Communications Technology Specialist be approved for the Board's consideration, Policy 1008 – "Communications" was to be brought back to the Committee for revision to include the role of the specialist in the Division's Communications Policy.

#### **Recommendation:**

That Policy 1008 – "Communications Protocol" be rescinded and replaced with Policy 1008 – "Communications".

#### **B) Joint City Task Force Ad-Hoc Committee**

The Minutes of the Joint City Task Force Ad-Hoc Committee meeting held November 7 and December 1, 2011 were received as information. (Appendix "C" and "D").

Trustee Bowslaugh noted the next Committee meeting would be held in the new year and the Mayor and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees would be invited to attend.

**7. OPERATIONS INFORMATION**

- The report regarding the Division's sensory intervention programming prepared by Learning Support Services Facilitators in response to Trustee Kruck's request for information regarding the use of exercise balls in the classroom was received as information. Senior Administration was directed to include the report as an Appendix to the minutes for the information of the rest of the Board of Trustees. (Appendix "E").
- Trustee Bowslaugh reported on the Teacher Liaison Committee meeting held November 29, 2011. It was noted a budget request regarding a proposed mentorship program would be brought forward.
- Trustee Bowslaugh asked if there was any feedback with respect to the use of translators at the recent parent/teacher interviews. It was noted there had not been any complaints. Mrs. Bowslaugh noted she had spoken to an employee of the Division whose husband might be interested in providing services.
- Trustee Bowslaugh reported on the Committee meeting with Alexander students held on December 1, 2011 as well as the meeting with Alexander Parent Council held on December 6, 2011.
- Discussions were held regarding the possibility of meeting with representatives of the judiciary system and probationary services at some point in the future.

**8. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday, January 10, 2012, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Board Room.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
P. Bowslaugh, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
J. Murray

\_\_\_\_\_  
K. Sumner

\_\_\_\_\_  
M. Snelling (Alternate)



# BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION POLICY

## Appendix "A"

### REVISED POLICY 1008

### COMMUNICATIONS

*Adopted: --DRAFT-- (December 12, 2011)*

#### Statement of Commitment

The Board of Trustees is committed and obligated to imparting meaningful information to the general public, its constituents, staff, and students in an open, honest, transparent, and respectful manner. Similarly, the Board of Trustees is committed to providing for the exchange of ideas, information, suggestions, and advice regarding matters related to public education, school board and school division operations, the safety, security and well-being of students, and the scope and quality of programs and services within the Brandon School Division. Matters related to complaints and concerns regarding specific schools, personnel and to individual student situations are communicated through the appropriate protocols as established by the Board of Trustees.

In the process of communication individual Trustees and the Corporate Board represent the interests of the community, reflect the values of the community and serve as a significant communication bridge between the community and the Division. In doing so Trustees and the Board build positive relationships with all people.

#### Principles of Communication

The Board of Trustees recognizes that communication within the School Division is a multi-faceted process involving all staff, students, parents, community members. The Board believes that such communication promotes a system-wide culture of openness that supports these principles:

- an environment of trust, safety, and respect;
- student learning and achievement; and
- the Board's Foundational Statements of Mission, Vision and Policies/Procedures.

These principles are to ensure that all communications given and received are administered in a manner that promotes the use of a wide range of methodologies including person to person(s) discussion, written (internal and external) communiques, technological avenues.

The business of the Division (Board and employees) is conducted with honour and integrity in a climate of trust, openness, free from fear of reprisal. The communication of such business is to be characterized by:

1. respect for the confidentiality of information;
2. positive relationships amongst constituents;
3. Trustees and employees model respect and courtesy for all in their choice of words, body language, and actions;
4. Trustees and employees endeavour to keep the public well informed; and
5. Trustees model ideals of democracy by engaging fully in debate in which they are open to the ideas and opinions of others and present their own ideas as accurately as they are able.

### **Building Positive Relationships**

In building positive relationships individual Trustees, the corporate Board and all employees align practice within their respective roles, responsibilities, codes of conduct as outlined in legislation, policies/procedures.

### **Communicating with Constituents in a Timely, Accurate, Respectful Manner**

Each constituent within the community has different needs, expectations and priorities. Any communication plan endeavours to be aware of their individual and collective needs.

In an effort to be responsive to the needs and expectations of constituents and their groups the Board is committed to open, regular, two way communications. This includes groups within our organization and those from the community at large.

Constituents include:

Students: Students are a primary constituent group and the reason for the Division's existence.

Parent Councils: These Councils play an important role in the Brandon School Division. It is, therefore, essential that communication flow from the Board, the schools and the principals to the councils. It is essential that the Board take responsibility to continually develop procedures for receiving feedback from these councils.

Business and Industry: These constituents represent an opportunity for mutually beneficial relationships. The special interests and concerns regarding education from business and industry must be addressed.

Educational Institutions, Agencies and Organizations: The Board recognizes the benefits of maintaining liaisons and memberships in related educational institutions, organizations and agencies.

Government and Government Agencies: The Board recognizes the importance of developing, maintaining and enhancing positive relationships with all levels of government and government organizations.

Parents: This group, although represented through Parent Councils, needs to be informed by the Board, the senior administration, and schools about educational issues, programs and policies which directly affect them.

Staff/Employees: The Board recognizes that all staff are ambassadors for the Brandon School Division. By providing them with timely and correct information, they are able to communicate a clear, informed message about education in the Brandon School Division to our public.

General Electorate: The Board recognizes that the general electorate has a serious and ongoing interest in the purpose, processes, outcomes, costs, effectiveness, and efficiency of public education. Individual electorate constituents and groups of constituents have special interests, views, ideas, and concerns regarding education that must be addressed.

The staff are representatives of the Division and, therefore, have a front line role in communicating the image and state of the Division. Effective communications begin from inside the organization. Communication is a carefully planned and integral part of the successful management of its human resources. It is the responsibility of staff to be proactive in obtaining information regarding Board decisions. The Principal is a key person responsible for coordination of communications to staff, students, parents and parent councils at the school level.

A Communications and Technology Specialist advances the Board's communications program by undertaking a variety of technological activities under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools/Chief Executive Officer.

### **Protocol for Concerns and Complaints**

The Board of Trustees recognizes that concerns/complaints may arise regarding School Division personnel, programs, activities and/or operations. The Board has, therefore, established a formal protocol for resolving such concerns/complaints in a positive, honest and respectful manner which will address any misunderstandings and promote a healthy learning environment for its students.

Concerns/complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible and in a timely manner with respect and dignity for all involved. All concerns/complaints shall be handled in confidence. Should a concern/complaint be brought directly to the Board as a whole, or to an individual Board member, the complainant will be advised of the proper channelling for their concern/complaint as follows:

- Teacher
- School Administrator
- Associate Superintendent
- Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer
- Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will only address a concern/complaint after all other appropriate channels have been accessed. Individual Board members will not go to the source of the problem by him/herself unless so directed by a quorum of the Board of Trustees in a legal session. Written response of the Board of Trustees' decision will be provided to all parties involved in the concern/complaint.

### **Media Relations**

The Board of Trustees recognizes that the media plays an important role in the dissemination of school policies, programs, procedures, achievement, decisions and critical issues. It is advantageous for both parties to develop an effective, continuous, long term and honest working relationship. All media must be treated equally.

- The Chairperson of the Board is the spokesperson on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
- The Superintendent of Schools/Chief Executive Officer is the official spokesperson on behalf of the School Division regarding instructional, administrative, and operations matters (including critical events and crisis communication).
- The Secretary-Treasurer is the official spokesperson on behalf of the Division regarding financial matters.

UNDER REVIEW

## Appendix B

POLICY 1008

# COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

The Board of Trustees approves the Communications Protocol document dated December, 1997 as a guideline for the operations of the Communications Department and as a reference document by the Public Relations Committee.

(Complete document available in the Administration Office.)

**December, 1997**



*"Accepting the Challenge"*

Motion 158/97

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# **THE BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL**

## **Planning the Communications Process in the Brandon School Division**

Communications was one area identified by the Board at a June, 1996 Workshop to be reviewed. The following protocol is a result of that initiative and is intended to provide a more focused-effective and organized approach to internal and external communication within the Brandon School Division #40

For this protocol to be effective communication must be a priority throughout the school system and have the support of trustees and staff.

*Prepared at the direction of the  
Public Relations Committee of the Board of Trustees, June 1997.  
The contribution of  
Mr. Art Oscar, Administrator of Communications and Resources is  
gratefully acknowledged.*

## Logo and Slogan



**"Accepting the Challenge"**

The logo of the Brandon School Division serves as a visual identity and expression for internal and external audiences. The logo states visually what the Division is about - namely students and student progress in an educational environment. The three figures represent the three general stages of a student's educational progress from early years to middle years and finally to the senior years and graduation.

The slogan "Accepting the Challenge" reflects a common sense of purpose and focus for all employee groups in the Division.

*The logo and slogan were adopted June, 1989.*

### **Goals of Effective Communications**

- to develop a positive public image within our organization and the community at large
- to maintain consistent two-way communication with all constituent groups
- to define a communications philosophy and practice suited to the Brandon School Division
- to maintain a proactive approach to communications
- to develop an awareness of the role good communications play in the Division
- to develop and maintain an open policy regarding communications
- to help reduce misunderstandings
- to gain support among our peers and educational constituents
- to fulfill a basic responsibility to our community
- to provide opportunities which promote communication and understanding among constituent groups

### **Benefits of a Communications Protocol**

- public awareness will be enhanced and a positive image of public education in the Brandon School Division will be promoted
- trust and respect between all educational partners will be developed and promoted
- the gap between reality and perception of events and activities of the educational system will be diminished
- public feedback will become a more integral component of the Division's communications strategy
- information will be communicated in a more consistent manner among the educational partners
- communication roles of the employees will be clarified

## **Nature of Effective Communications**

- It is:
  - planned
  - 2-way
  - consistent
  - realistic
  - considers options and alternatives
  - timely
  - honest
  - positive in nature
  - avoids an ad hoc approach
  - open
  - an integral part of the daily business of the school system
  - proactive
- It is appropriately distributed.
- It utilizes interpersonal and mass communications.
- It believes face to face communications is the most effective method of communication.
- It encourages public involvement.
- It considers public attitudes.
- It provides vehicles that allow the Board to be accountable.

## **Communicating with Constituent Groups**

Each constituent group within the community has different needs, expectations and priorities. The communication plan endeavours to be aware of their existence, their distinctiveness and therefore their individual needs.

In an effort to be responsive to the needs and expectations of their constituent groups the Board is committed to open, regular, two way communications with all its constituent groups. This includes groups within our organization and those from the community at large.

### **- Primary Target Constituents**

**Advisory/Parent Councils** - These councils play an important role in the Brandon School Division. It is therefore essential that communication flow from the Board, the schools and the principals to the councils and it is essential that the Board take responsibility to continually develop procedures for receiving feedback from these councils.

**Business & Industry** - These constituents represent an opportunity for mutually beneficial partnerships. The special interests and concerns about education of this constituent group must be addressed.

**Educational Institutions, Agencies & Organizations** - The Board recognizes the benefits of maintaining liaisons and memberships in related educational institutions, organizations and agencies.

**Government & Government Agencies** - In order for the Division to function effectively, interaction and communication between the Division and all levels of government and government organizations concerned with the welfare of students must be maintained.

**Non-Parents** - This group represents a large segment of taxpayers in the Brandon School Division and therefore must be included in the flow of communications.

**Parents** - This group, although represented through Advisory/Parent Councils, needs to be informed by the Board and the schools about educational issues, programs and policies by which they are directly affected. The school assumes a front line role in this task. This role must be encouraged by the Board.

**Staff** - They are ambassadors for the Brandon school system. By providing them with timely and correct information, they will be able to communicate a clear, informed message about education in the Brandon School Division to our publics.

**Students** - They are a primary constituent group and the reason for the Division's existence.

When the Board and Administration are clear about:

- with which group they wish to communicate
- what information needs to be communicated

an appropriate communication vehicle(s) can be selected - refer Appendix A.

## **Staff Roles in Communications**

- The Board recognizes:
  - that the Division's primary image is based on quality service and the achievement of excellence
  - that the staff are representatives of the Division and therefore have a front-line role in communicating the image and state of the Division
  - that effective communications begin from inside the organization
  - that communication is a carefully planned and integral part of the successful management of its human resources
  - and that it is the responsibility of staff to be proactive in obtaining information regarding Board decisions
  - that the principal is the key person responsible for co-ordination of communications to staff, students, parents and advisory councils
- The responsibility of the Public Relations Committee of the Board is to provide overall direction regarding areas related to communications and public relations and to promote positive relations and information to the internal and external publics of the Division.
- The Communications Officer will assist the Board's communications program by undertaking a variety of activities as determined from time to time by the Board and under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools.

## **Media Relations**

The Brandon School Division recognizes:

- that the media plays an important role in the dissemination of school policies, programs, procedures, achievements, decisions and critical issues
- that it is advantageous for both parties to develop an effective, continuous, long term and honest working relationship, and
- that all media must be treated equally
- reference to Policy - Section K - School Community Relations - Code KBCA/BDDC - Appendix.

### **Media Access - "Who Speaks for the Brandon School Division"**

- The Brandon School Board supports the position that the media have access to trustees, administrators and other staff members to discuss matters involving the school system in which the person is directly involved or affected.
- Certain individuals have the direct responsibility to speak to the media as designated spokesperson by virtue of their position.
  - The chairperson of the Board is the spokesperson on behalf of the Board regarding Trustee decisions.
  - The Superintendent of Schools is the official spokesperson on behalf of the Division regarding instructional and administrative decisions.
  - The Secretary-Treasurer is the official spokesperson on behalf of the Division regarding financial or business matters.
  - The principal, consultant or supervisor is the official spokesperson on behalf of the school or department.

Each of the above mentioned staff may delegate a person(s) to speak to the media on their behalf.

- Employees and trustees are responsible for their own statements and/or opinions given to the media.
- Any employee has the right to refuse to speak to the media and redirect questions or concerns to an appropriate source.

## **Crisis Communications**

The Board of the Brandon School Division recognizes that communications play a vital role during a crisis situation. Therefore the Division has developed a comprehensive plan entitled "Emergency Procedures Plan in the Brandon School Division" to deal with communications in a crisis which includes:

- a response team in every school - one member of each team is designated as a media liaison
- a communication flow-chart tailored to several different crisis situations
- a reference list of individuals to be contacted during a crisis
- a Central Office response team. The Superintendent of Schools or his designate is responsible for media relations.

In an effort to inform the parents of procedures to follow if a crisis situation occurs a letter is sent annually to parents outlining the procedures. The procedures are printed on the annual Division Calendar distributed to all parents.

(refer to the Brandon School Division Emergency Procedures Manual)



## **Current Communications Tools**

### **Regular Activities:**

- Employee Service Recognition Program - Policy Manual: Section G: Personnel - GCPL-R (a) Long Service Recognition (b) Leaving the Employ of the Division Recognition of Service Policy Manual - Section G: Personnel - GCPB/GCPC
- Staff presentations to the Board
- Annual Report - Emphasis Education
- Bi-monthly newsletter - PAGES
- Graduation Supplement
- Teaching & Learning articles
- Kindergarten entrance - Division magnet distribution
- Board meetings broadcast on Community Access 12
- Advertisements in the Brandon Sun

### **Informational & Promotional materials for distribution:**

- Magnets • Calendar Cards • Christmas Cards • Thank-you Stickers • Hats
- Lapel Pins • Presentation folders • Thank-you Cards • Name Tags
- Certificates • Congratulations Cards

### **Divisional Information Brochures:**

- Friends of Education • Use of Intoxicating Substances In Schools
- Parent Resource Kit • Student Resource Kit • Homework It Helps • New Residents • Registration Information for Grade 7 & 8 • Early Years • Tri-School Restructuring • New Principal's Orientation Information • Clinical Services
- Brandon School Division Overview • Policy on Student Conduct • Work Education
- Student Transportation • Public Participation at Board Meetings • Information insert for water bills/tax notices • Community Transition & Lifeskills pamphlet • Transportation • School Attendance: A Parent's Guide • Harassment Policy

### **Posters:**

- Policy On Student Conduct • The Use of Drugs, Alcohol and Intoxicating Substances in Schools • Bringing Weapons to School • School Vandalism Watch
- Spilled Blood • Harassment

NOTE: The foregoing represents communication tools in existence at the time of preparation of this report and are subject to additions and deletions from time to time.

## **Evaluation of Communications**

- The Board of the Brandon School Division is aware of the need for feedback regarding the communications and public relations initiatives.
- The Board considers both formal and informal feedback important.
- The Board believes evaluation is an on-going process.
- The Board provides opportunities for formal feedback process when it deems necessary.
- The Board considers both internal and external stakeholders as evaluation sources.

## **Public Relations Committee**

- In recognition of the importance of communications in the Division the Board maintains a Public Relations Committee consisting of Trustees, members of Senior Administration and the Communications Officer.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS PLANNING CHART

## Appendix A

Project \_\_\_\_\_

## COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

[illegible]

# Appendix C

Printed by: **Sheri Bailey**

Title: : **Joint Task force Workgroup City & School Division : Br...**

From: ■ Pat Bowslaugh

Monday, November 07, 2011 9:38:57 PM



Subject: : Joint Task force Workgroup City & School Division

To: ■ <montague@mymts.net> ; sheri bailey

Cc: ■ <m.snelling@brandon.ca> ■ <j.chaboyer@brandon.ca>  
■ <h.friesen@brandon.ca> ■ **Sheri Bailey** ■ <m.blight@brandon.ca>  
■ <montague@mts.net> ■ Kevan Sumner  
■ <glen.rcmha@mts.net> ; Jim Murray

## SHARK Committee Minutes

Wednesday, November 2/11  
City Hall 5:00pm

Present: Jan Chaboyer, Murray Blight, Stephen Montague, Marty Snelling, Kevan Sumner, Pat Bowslaugh

### 1. Updates:

- Gerry Barnes and Perry Rocque are still working on the Joint Use Agreement. There is a potential "Memorandum of understanding" that can be worked out.
- There is a possibility that there will be an assessment done by the City, possibly in March, of the collective resources in the city.
- There was a brief discussion about the costs for school hockey teams renting City facilities as well as the Sportsplex track for school Track and Field events.

2. There was a brief discussion concerning both the upcoming City Budget and the BSD budget. The BSD Budget meeting times were shared as well as the upcoming city Ward meetings.

3. EAL: A list of the schools with their EAL enrollments was shared as information as to the complexity of managing this educational component.

4. Government Plans for Class sizes maxing at 20 students in K - 3 was discussed with the fact that most schools do not have the physical space for the extra classroom plus the additional staffing costs.

This lead to reports as councilors were campaigning that residents in the southern areas of the city have significant concerns about the lack of schools in the proximity. It was also noted that the city is in the process of extending its boundaries in the southern areas of the city.

5. The Aboriginal Community concerns were updated with those topics including housing, work force initiatives, and "what is BSD doing in terms of education?" being some of the concerns heard by the councilors at the Urban Aboriginal Committee. This Committee wants to be "kept in the loop" as to what BSD is doing. BSD reported on the meeting with the Aboriginal group on the previous evening (November 1) with the outcome of

a budget proposal that addresses some of the educational concerns. BSD would appreciate Council's support at budget time to help this proceed.

6. Youth Conference: It is suggested that we pursue establishing a date in March to hold a two day event. Stephen Montague shared the documents from the previous conference

(held seven years ago) and the suggestion was that we consider following the same model. More plans to

be made at our next meeting. Both Richard Greer and Vince Harris were identified as potential players in the planning.

7. Library Board Report: It was suggested that, much as like in the distant past, that a summer reading program be initiated, possibly for Grade 2 or 3 students. This would be curriculum based with a focus on maintaining reading skills throughout the summer.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

November 15: Joint Council and Brandon School Division Meeting at 6:00pm at the McLaren Room, BSD

December 1: SHARK Committee at Marty Snelling's Board Room at 5:00pm

NOTE: A letter has been received from H. Friesen confirming that Councilors Blight, Chaboyer and Montague will continue as the City Council Reps for the upcoming term.

If you have any additions, clarifications or corrections, please let Pat know so the notes will be accurate for our upcoming meeting.

**Suggested points for the joint City, BSD Meeting included:**

- joint school/city facilities usage agreement
- playground cost sharing
- Aboriginal plans
- City expansion impact
- Youth Conference
- School and City Budgets

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# Appendix D

## Shark Committee Meeting

BSD Office  
5:00pm  
December 1/11

Present: Jan Chaboyer, Marty Snelling, Kevan Sumner, Jim Murray, Pat Bowslaugh  
Regrets: Murray Blight, Stephen Montague

### 1. Reflections on the total Council/ School Board Meeting:

It was felt that this had been a very positive meeting with much accomplished through the open and engaging dialogue. The update on the pending completion of the Memorandum of Understanding regarding shared activities with City and School Division working together was cited as being very positive.

2. It was reported that the City is well on its way in its budget deliberations. BSD has budget feedback from its committees and will proceed with the scheduled deliberations in the new year. Both groups reported on the pressing issues to be considered .

### 3. High School Drop out concerns:

BSD has the Neelin Off Campus school to address the issue of students who have not completed Grade 12. This has been hugely successful with significant numbers of graduates. However, the Department of Education introduced the mandate that all students MUST remain in school until age 18. The implications for BSD may be many as this move, while meant to be positive, has financial implications in terms of classroom space, staffing and appropriate placements for the students, some of whom have no desire to be in school.

### 4. Youth Forum:

No report as Stephen could not be present.

### 5. Affordable Housing:

The STEP program (Solutions to end Poverty) was discussed with mention on the Pacific and Stickney Avenue projects. It was noted that these two sites will add additional students to New Era School which is already dealing with a large enrollment.

### 6. Aboriginal Committee:

Marty reported on the City Aboriginal Committee on which he is a member. The report focused on the hiring of Aboriginal people. Both the RHA and MB Hydro were mentioned as having plans.

### 7. Challenged Youth:

BSD has numerous youth who have been assigned to Brandon through the Court System. This has provided a significant challenge to BSD to accommodate these students. This topic had arisen at a Ward meeting and was responded to by the Chief of Police. On going monitoring is taking place.

**8. Hales Museum:**

There are ongoing concerns that these materials need a proper "home" where they can be viewed.

**9. Perry Roque:**

Pat reported having a very helpful discussion with Perry following the joint City/BSD meeting. Perry is very supportive of alternative types of playgrounds and has volunteered to help Parent Councils as they plan for new construction.

**10. Mayor's Press Conference:**

We were informed that the mayor was planning a press conference with the vision for the city as it relates to long term planning and budget considerations. It is open to the public on Tuesday, December 6/11 at City Hall.

**11. Update on Poverty:**

Both Healthy Food Committee and "Healthy Brandon" were cited. There is a survey being given out to assess how to serve the local situations/economy. Connecting with Peak of the Market was also discussed.

**12. Next meeting:**

It was suggested that the next meeting of this committee should include both Mayor Shari and Board Chair Mark Sefton. It will therefore be at their convenience. Agenda items to be included:

Aboriginal task Force

Manitoba Hydro: Trees for Schools

Memorandum of Understanding

# Appendix E

Students, in Brandon School Division, who present as having difficulty with academic achievement, engagement, social/emotional difficulties and/or physical difficulties, are identified by school teams. Referrals may be made to occupational therapy and/or physiotherapy for assessment and support recommendations.

Students who may require some of the recommendations might include, but is not limited to, students diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, sensory processing difficulties, decreased core strength/low tone (e.g. Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy) and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

In order to support our students who require postural support, vestibular sensory input, deep pressure sensory input and/or de-stressor options, the Occupational Therapist and/or Physiotherapist may make some of the following treatment suggestions.

Interventions used to provide **Postural Support or Vestibular Sensory Input** include:

- Swiss discs or move-n-sit cushions: Most of the schools in the division have at least one child using this type of cushion for vestibular input and/or attention issues. Resource teachers sometimes implement the cushions without OT consultation.
- Hokki Stools (new to OT/PT/BSD this October, with a current trial based on OT recommendation, being conducted with two students at O'Kelly school): The benefit of these alternative seating devices include:
  - In comparison with stability/exercise balls, the seat-to-contact surface makes for increased sitting safety, soft base padding prevents slipping during dynamic sitting, and body and mind are activated and an existing urge to move is supported productively.
  - Stability balls (exercise balls) often require some type of supporting base in order for the student to sit safely at their desk.
- Exercise/Stability Balls including Peanut Balls are also recommended by the OT/PT for specific core strengthening/postural support, vestibular input, gross motor exercise routines and sensory programming. Currently, the grade 4 classroom at O'Kelly School has six stability balls instead of regular classroom chairs. The teacher rotates which children use the stability balls. Note: for classroom use, exercise/stability balls require a stabilizer to prevent rolling.
- Trampolines: A basic mini-trampoline are used for vestibular input during sensory programming, gross motor development (core strengthening). At present there is a trampoline being used at Linden Lanes School and one ordered for O'Kelly School.
- Swings (i.e. ceiling installed swings): At present the Soft Comfort Swing Chair is being trialed with a grade one student at Riverview with positive results for sensory programming/vestibular input. Other varieties currently existing in



schools are being recommended and monitored by OT's for vestibular therapy. A "Rocking Reading Chair" is currently being used in a few sensory spaces (e.g. J.R. Reid School), specifically with middle year students to provide vestibular orientation opportunities and providing calming sensory input. The Lifeskills' programs in the division also use a variety of swings for vestibular input and sensory programming. Betty Gibson has one ceiling mounted swing.

- Exerbug: These are being recommended by the OT's for vestibular input during sensory programming. This tool is a bilateral coordination machine and requires use of different combinations of the upper body muscle groups. The following schools are currently using the Exerbug: O'Kelly, St. Augustine and one has been ordered for Riverview.

#### Interventions used to provide **Deep Pressure Sensory Input**:

- Weighted Vests/Blankets/Lap pads: These products are being recommended solely by the OTs and must be monitored under a therapist's supervision. This type of intervention provides deep pressure to elicit a calming response from the sensory system. These are frequently worked into functional behavioural intervention plans as a part of the de-escalation process. Vests and lap pads are used frequently in the classroom setting.
- Therapeutic Brushing and Joint Compressions: OTs are recommending this deep pressure technique with some students for management of sensory processing difficulties. The goal of the technique is to provide deep pressure/touch, which is calming and organizing for the student. The OT provides training to the caregivers (i.e. school team/parents) and must monitor the program.

#### Other Interventions recommended for Sensory Programming may include:

- Fidget Balls (Bead Gel Balls)
- Weighted Balls
- Sensory Brushes
- Tangle Therapy
- Theraputty
- Oral Motor Tools (chew'ese, chew'lery, super chews)

The above list is not all-inclusive as OT/PT treatment recommendations change depending on the specific needs of the student.

#### Research regarding the benefits of exercise/stability balls:

Although the use of therapy cushions in this study did not result in substantial change in either in-seat or on-task behavior for the 2 participants, this study's results add to the limited body of research on sensory-based intervention and,

specifically, alternative seating. The results raise important questions about what specific qualities make alternative seating devices effective in promoting behavioral changes. Results also suggest that the effectiveness of alternative seating devices may be linked to their ability to impose substantial postural and balance demands or to provide intensive balance of sensory feedback. Both of these qualities are absent or decreased with the therapy cushion but are present to a greater degree with devices such as therapy balls.

Yumeda, C. & Dietz, J. "Effects of therapy cushions on classroom behaviors of children with autism spectrum disorder". *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, March/April 2011, volume 65, 2.

Results of the stability ball intervention revealed increased levels of attention, decreased levels of hyperactivity and increased time on-task and in-seat or on ball. Finding from the social validity questionnaire demonstrated that teachers preferred the stability balls over chairs. The study provides additional evidence for the effectiveness of stability balls in the general education classroom for children who exhibit difficulties with attention and hyperactivity.

Fedewa, A. & Erwin, H. "Stability balls and students with attention and hyperactivity concerns: Implications for on-task and in-seat behavior". *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, July/August 2011, Volume 4.

Findings of the study support the use of therapy balls for students with ADHD as an alternative classroom seating option. For all participants both in-seat behavior and legible word productivity improved when seated on the therapy balls. In addition, the teachers and students general preferences for therapy balls for seating supported the social validity of the intervention. Therapists and the teacher reported observing substantial student differences in movement patterns (eg. Bouncing, gently rocking) while seated on the therapy balls. One explanation could be self-modulation of personal sensory needs by each student in order to maintain an optimal state of arousal. This intervention strategy was found to be compatible with inclusive educational practice and interdisciplinary teaming.

Schilling, D., et al. "Classroom seating for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: Therapy balls versus chairs". *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Sept/Oct. 2003, Volume 57, 5.

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