



"Accepting the Challenge"

Policy Review Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 8, 2011 – 7:30 a.m.
Board Room, Administration Office

Present: P. Bartlette (Chairperson), G. Kruck, K. Sumner, Dr. D. Michaels,
G. Barnes.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Policy Review Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:40 a.m. by the Committee Chairperson, Trustee Bartlette.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Sumner requested discussions regarding the scheduling of future Committee meetings be placed on the agenda. The Policy Review Committee Agenda was approved as amended.

3. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the Minutes of February 1, 2011.

4. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

The Committee agreed their governance goal for the next four years would be to continue analyzing and cross-referencing all policies as they relate to the six principles listed in Policy 1001.1 – "Equity". As well, the Committee would continue to develop any new policies referred to them by the Board of Trustees, as the need arises.

5. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE MATTERS:

a) Review of Board Policies using the Six Principles of Policy 1001.1 – "Equity".

The Committee began their review of the policies under Part 4 - "School Program and Organization" using the six principles of equity listed in Policy 1001.1.

Policy 4001 – "Off-site Activities"

The Committee began equity discussions on this policy by reviewing the research of Senior Administration with respect to the Committee's request to "research, study and report on the policies and practices available across Canada with respect to school fees, student fees, and/or financial support for extra-curricular activities". Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, reviewed Senior Administration's findings noting that "some Provinces and/or School Divisions recognize that financial hardship may be an issue for families when it comes to curricular activities and school fees, no one includes extra-curricular activities in their policies except to define what is considered an extra-curricular activity. Those policies addressing hardship which includes waiving of fees, also note there are alternatives such as fundraising, time-payments, or reduced fees". Dr. Michaels further noted that although the research states extra-curricular activities are not included in hardship policies, it has been her experience through contact with other Divisions that Divisions with hardship policies recognize extra-curricular activities as well, and no child is left behind due to financial hardship. The Committee directed the Superintendent to provide them with a written report regarding her experience in this area.

The Committee held lengthy discussions regarding co-curricular vs. extra-curricular activities; fundraising, requesting permission to hold an activity prior to fundraising in order to allow the Board to approve the activity in principle; the value of initiative on the part of students versus the expectations that they should just "have it"; the role of activities within the school system versus the role of activities in the community.

The Committee agreed these matters need to be addressed in the off-site activity policy and, include such things as resources, ability to pay, opportunity to access fundraising for all, educational value and whether or not that same educational value can be achieved closer to home. The Committee also suggested two policies may be required with a separate policy for extra-curricular activities.

Discussions were held regarding the Board's need to define their beliefs in this area and determine what the Division can afford to pay for. It was agreed the Secretary-Treasurer would develop a financial hardship procedure which would be displayed on the Division website and in school registration guides. The Secretary-Treasurer was also to supply the B.C. Supreme Court ruling on this matter. The Superintendent, together with Trustee Sumner would draft a belief statement to be included in Policy 4001 and bring back to the Committee for review. Before taking anything to the Board on this matter, consultation and feedback would take place first. It was further agreed that discussions regarding the Manitoba High School Athletic Association programming on a Provincial basis would be included in further discussions regarding equity and accessibility for all.

The Committee agreed they would continue to review Part 4 – "School Program and Organization" as it relates to the six equity principles, for the next Committee meeting.

b) Research Regarding Student Fees Across Canada

This item was included in discussions regarding Policy 4001 – "Off-site Activities".

c) Policy Discussion and Clarification

Due to time constraints, it was agreed this matter would be deferred to another meeting.

d) Scheduling Meeting Times

Discussions were held regarding finding another meeting time or approving a different alternate so that meetings would not need to be cancelled. It was agreed the Committee Chairperson would follow-up on this matter.

6. OPERATIONS INFORMATION

NIL

7. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Tuesday, April 5, 2011, 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., Board Room.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Bartlette, Chair

G. Kruck

K. Sumner

D. Karnes (Alternate)