



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

Education Committee Minutes

Wednesday, May 22, 2013, 11:30 a.m.

Board Room, Administration Office

Present: P. Bartlette (Chairperson), P. Bowslaugh, M. Snelling
M. Sefton (Alternate), Dr. D. Michaels, Superintendent

Guests: Mr. Phil Vickers, Principal, Betty Gibson School
Ms. Marsilah Pearson, Program Facilitator
Marnie Wilson, Division Research and Evaluation Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Education Committee Meeting was called to order at 11:40 a.m. by the Committee Chairperson, Mr. Bartlette.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Bowslaugh requested the addition of two items should time permit at the end of the meeting. The agenda was approved as amended.

3. PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

The Committee minutes from April 15, 2013 were received as information.

4. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

NIL

5. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE MATTERS

A) RESPONSE TO DIVERSITY (INTERVENTION)

Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, provided background information regarding the draft Response to Intervention (RTI) policy which was provided to the Committee. She noted the proposed policy would be the third installment to Policy 4044 – “Appropriate Educational Programming”. Dr. Michaels confirmed the Quality Support Services Committee, of which Mr. Vickers and Ms. Pearson were co-chairs, had been working on the proposed policy for approximately two years.

Mr. Vickers, Principal of Betty Gibson School, spoke to the draft policy. He noted the policy was developed to address how the Brandon School Division should respond to every student's learning in the division. He reviewed the three tiers noted in the policy which form the continuum of interventions for the RTI Model. Mr. Vickers also reviewed the four guiding principles in the policy which help to provide for a child-centred and inclusive learning environment. Mr. Vickers stressed it was important not to label students and have them locked into one stream. Through the RTI model students would be able to move in and out of the various levels on an as needed basis. Therefore, Mr. Vickers noted there was some concern

regarding the title of the policy as the word “intervention” could be connected with a deficit for the child involved.

Discussions were held regarding the rights of students in relation to the policy; the draft policy’s connection to other Division policies; brain based learning; and initiatives undertaken by the Division to promote student engagement. Trustees inquired about the proposed timelines for implementation of the draft policy. The Superintendent confirmed should the Board approve the policy the next step would be to develop procedures.

Trustees spoke to the policy noting their appreciation for the clarity of it and the philosophy behind it.

Superintendent, Dr. Michaels spoke to the role of the principal with respect to implementation of the policy. Further discussions were held regarding timelines within the policy; however, it was noted that each student is different; therefore, the timelines for each student will also be different. It was agreed that the proposed policy and philosophy behind it will not make life easy for the adults involved as the policy ensures differentiation for each student. The proposed policy requires schools to “change the way we do business” allowing for a much more child-centred approach to teaching.

Discussions were also held regarding the name of the policy. It was noted the word “intervention” can be limiting to a student as it has connotations that the child has a deficit. Use of the words “diversity” and “student-centred” were also discussed. Ms. Wilson, Evaluation and Research Specialist for the Division, noted that she had attended a workshop by Dr. Chris Webber and his explanation that “Response to Intervention” referred to the student’s response to intervention which provided a very different connotation to the word intervention.

The Committee agreed to bring the policy to the Board of Trustees for approval in June following a final review of the draft policy at the next Education Committee meeting. Once approved by the Board of Trustees, Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, confirmed the policy would be reviewed and discussed at the August school opening meeting following which the development of procedures would begin.

The Committee Chairperson thanked Mr. Vickers and Ms. Pearson for their presentation. Mr. Vickers and Ms. Pearson exited the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

6. BRIEFINGS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION

NIL

7. OPERATIONS INFORMATION

a) POINT OF PRIVILEGE:

Trustee Bowslaugh brought forth two newspaper articles she felt might be of interest to the Committee. The first article was regarding Aboriginal Education at Major Pratt School which she planned to share with the Division’s Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee. The second article was on “traditional dancing” which she would be referring to the LIFT Committee.

b) Policy 1001.2

Superintendent, Dr. Michaels confirmed the first set of 4 pilot schools would be participating in the new assessment process in the next school year. She confirmed the Board will be provided with the first set of results using this new assessment process before Christmas Break of the next school year.

c) POINT OF PRIVILEGE:

Trustee Bowslaugh noted last school year the Rotary Club, of which she is a member, set aside funds to purchase books for several students in four different schools. She spoke to the success of the project and student reactions to receiving the books. She noted the Rotary Club would again like to purchase books and asked the Superintendent for four schools which she felt would benefit from this project.

8. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Wednesday, June 17, 2013, 11:30 a.m. Board Room.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Bartlette, Chair

P. Bowslaugh

M. Snelling

M. Sefton (Alternate)