



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

Finance and Facilities Committee Minutes

Monday, November 22, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.
Boardroom, Administration Office

Present: S. Bambridge C. Ekenna
B. Foley K. Fallis
J. Gobeil D. Kejick
L. Letain L. Ross

Also Present: D. Labossiere
M. Gustafson
S. Gilleshammer
J. Zilkey

Regrets: J. Murray

1. COMMITTEE ITEMS

A. Stakeholder Meetings/Feedback Forms

The Committee received as information the meeting minutes and budget feedback from the stakeholder groups, which included Brandon Teachers' Association (BTA), CUPE Local 737, Out-of-Scope Employees, Parent Council representatives and the Brandon Chamber of Commerce.

B. Trustee Budget Requests

The Committee reviewed and discussed the Trustee Budget Requests received for the 2022-2023 Budget.

- **C. Ekenna**
 - Addition of two (2) microwaves in each of the following elementary schools:
 - Maryland Park, King George, New Era, and either Riverheights or Earl Oxford.

Trustee Ekenna noted that he had met with several parents who would really like this request put into place. It would assist with inclusion for everyone, ensures that kids are able to value and recognize uniqueness, for a small cost.

Trustees Bambridge, Letain and Kejick responded, indicating that in the past, there were microwaves in schools, which were removed due to required supervision, time that students would stand in line waiting, injuries, no consistency with lunch hour volunteers, etc.

Trustee Bambridge suggested that thermoses be used to keep food warm, and that the Division could possibly request thermos donations. Mr. Mathew Gustafson, Superintendent/CEO added that Senior Administration can explore engaging the United Way or the Friends of Education Fund for thermos donations. Trustees agreed to refer this

item to Senior Administration. Strategies will be brought back to Trustees at a future meeting. Trustee Ekenna withdrew his Budget Request for Microwaves.

- **C. Ekenna**

- Request for Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS), which would:
 - increase collaboration to reduce gap
 - increase newcomers' participation in school events
 - reduce the language barriers
 - help make sense of the complex systems newcomers navigate

The Superintendent/CEO responded to this request, noting that SWIS has been in place in the Division for the last six (6) years. Designated space in schools for this program is problematic in schools that are at capacity. He spoke on the facilities report, which will be presented at a future meeting, and which will provide additional information regarding enrolment and capacities. Division social workers, psychologists, and speech language pathologists are also concerned about not having space in schools. The pandemic has impacted space to allow for physical distancing of students.

Discussion took place on engagement with the schools regarding available space in schools and renting outside space. Trustees asked questions for clarification.

Mr. Gustafson responded that Senior Administration would look at what space is available in schools, conduct an overview of the SWIS program, and look at available space around schools.

After discussions, the Committee agreed that the request was more of a Trustee Inquiry, hence the request will not be brought forward to Budget Deliberations.

- **B. Foley**

- Spanish Language Classes – Grades 11 and 12

Trustee Foley's Budget Request is to offer optional Spanish language classes at the 11/12 grade level. The request involves reviewing Brandon School Division's experience delivering Spanish language education in the previous eight (8) years including the specific courses and enrolment numbers, as well as summarizing how such courses are offered in other jurisdictions. The strong preference would be to offer the courses in person at high schools, but if not possible then options of for-credit distance education could be explored.

Trustee Foley noted in his request that other than English, Spanish is the most common mother tongue in our community, which includes 4.6% of Brandon's population. Study of language facilitates opportunities for employment, travel, cultural enrichment and new friendships. Also, learning Spanish can make learning another language easier.

The Superintendent/CEO spoke to this request, noting that both Vincent Massey High School and École secondaire Neelin High School had offered Spanish language classes previously, with Neelin still offering the Spanish language class.

There are currently three (3) Spanish Language Classes offered at Neelin:

- Grade 9, 34 students enrolled;
- Grade 10, 24 students enrolled;

- Grade 11/12, 18 students enrolled.

Committee discussion took place and Trustees asked questions for clarification. The Committee agreed to bring forward Trustee Foley's request to Budget Deliberations.

- **J. Gobeil**
 - Teaching Resources – Truth & Reconciliation

Trustee Gobeil's Budget request included:

- Additional teaching tools and resources be made available for classroom education on the topic of Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples of Canada. (to start, \$3,000 per school, totaling \$70,000)
- Teaching tools to cover the topics of Colonization in Canada, Indian Residential Schools and Survivor, the 60's Scoot, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties, and many more needed resources for classrooms to learn about the impact of colonization and the Calls to Action which have come out of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report.
- Looking at the Continuous Improvement Plan and goals for future areas of improvements, this action will fit in with the ongoing deliverables of sharing indigenous knowledge in our classrooms and in creating a better understanding of Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in our country of Canada.
- These resources would be a great collaborated effort of working with others in community such as the BUAPC to secure funding and support for ongoing partnerships with Indigenous Stakeholders of Brandon.

Discussion took place regarding teaching resources, curriculum, professional development, and engaging partners in the community. Trustees asked questions for clarification.

The Committee agreed to bring forward Trustee Gobeil's budget request to Budget Deliberations for further debate.

C. Review Monthly Reports (October)

The Secretary-Treasurer reviewed the Reports for the month of October and answered Trustee questions.

The reports were accepted as circulated.

2. OPERATIONS INFORMATION

- The Secretary-Treasurer provided an update on the following:
 - i. Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School – West Side Roof Replacement with Structural Upgrades

Respectfully submitted,

K. Fallis