

AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Engage, Inspire, Innovate ... Always Learning

MINUTES

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, OPEN SESSION AND REGULAR BOARD MEETING

6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 10, 2017

Maitland Room, Seaforth Education Centre
62 Chalk Street North, Seaforth, ON

PRESENT:

Trustees: Lynette Geddes, Robert Hunking, Alyson Kent, Nancy Rothwell, Colleen Schenk, Randy Wagler

Absent: Julie Moore, Doug Pratley

Senior Staff: Lisa Walsh, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board, Superintendents Janet Baird-Jackson, Jodie Baker, Peggy Blair, Paul Langis, Jane Morris, and Associate Superintendent Cheri Carter

Resource: Janice Richmond

Recording Secretary: Barb Crawford

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wagler called the meeting to order for the Committee of the Whole, Closed Session at 5:04 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CLOSED SESSION

MOTION 2017 10 319

(R. Hunking – N. Rothwell)

RESOLVED THAT this Board convene into Committee of the Whole, Closed Session.

CARRIED

Vice-Chair Alyson Kent was Chair for the Committee of the Whole, Closed Session.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, OPEN SESSION

MOTION 2017 10 320

(N. Rothwell – L. Geddes)

RESOLVED THAT this Board convene into Committee of the Whole, Open Session.

CARRIED

STRIVE Program – Presentation

Superintendent Blair introduced System Vice-Principal Luise Hoffman, Child and Youth Worker (CYW) Shalena Reid, Principal Marie McDade, and Principal Debbie Green.

Avon Maitland began the STRIVE Program in the fall of 2011/2012 with four programs throughout the board. At this time there are twenty-six programs in Avon Maitland. The program focus is improving fundamental academic skills for students and is managed by a CYW. There can be up to eight children/youth in the program.

Update re Trustee Session, November 18, 2017

Chair Wagler confirmed the final agenda for the session. Trustees will meet with Senior Staff on Friday evening, November 17th. On Saturday, November 18th, the trustee session will be focused on governance issues facing boards, case studies/observations followed by trustee orientation.

Trustee Open Time – Questions / Issues

Trustee Rothwell inquired how the SK and grade 1 split classes are doing. Superintendent Morris confirmed there are 3 combined classes this year and the feedback has been positive.

RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION**MOTION 2017 10 321****(N. Rothwell – C. Schenk)****RESOLVED THAT** this Board reconvene into Regular Session.**CARRIED**

Chair Wagler called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

Chair Wagler recited the Opening Statement:

*“We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the Anishnaabe Peoples. We wish to recognize the long history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and show our respect to them today. We recognize their stewardship of the land; may we all live with respect on this land and live in peace and friendship.”***ROUTINE MATTERS****Approval of Agenda**

Chair Wagler asked for removal of any Consent items. Trustee Schenk asked to remove the Communication and Advocacy Plan for discussion.

MOTION 2017 10 322**(L. Geddes – C. Schenk)****RESOLVED THAT** the Agenda of the Avon Maitland District School Board meeting be approved as amended.**CARRIED****Declaration of Pecuniary Interest***No member of the Board declared having a pecuniary interest regarding any item presented in this agenda.***Approval of Minutes****MOTION 2017 10 323****(R. Hunking – A. Kent)****RESOLVED THAT** the Minutes of the Avon Maitland District School Board meeting held Tuesday, September 26, 2017 be approved as presented.**CARRIED****Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, Report to Board Public Session

Vice-Chair Kent confirmed there was nothing to report from Closed Session.

Trustee Reflection – Trustee Lynette Geddes

St. Marys DCVI has their commencement ceremony in the fall so I was there last Friday evening. As a parent of six who has been to a *lot* of graduation ceremonies, I appreciate brevity from the dignitaries so my goal is to make the amount of time I speak shorter than the time it takes me to get to the stage. I usually speak about one concept that I believe is relevant to the group I am addressing.

This year, the concept that was floating around my brain was critical thinking but, after jotting down my thoughts, I decided it was too preachy and wouldn't come *close* to staying within my preferred time-frame.

So here I am, sharing these thoughts with all of you instead. Unfortunately, more time on the subject only expanded my thoughts. By Monday I had a multitude of ideas and had pretty much touched on the whole strategic plan. (Which speaks well for our strategic plan, now that I think of it.)

The spark for this topic was when I heard a radio interview about “real fake news” – specifically in this case incorrect information that was making the rounds on social media sites about the identity and motives of the gunman in Las Vegas – and how people can determine the veracity of any information they are receiving.

When I was a youth, (remember this started as a graduation speech) we had a lot of discussions around our supper table and, sometimes, when one of us spouted some idea that we had heard about, my father would repeat “that old saying” - believe half of what you read and none of what you hear. I was, of course, able to find the actual quote, and the identity of its author – Edgar Allan Poe - in seconds on the internet. And that instant access to all things factual – and fictional - is both a blessing and a curse.

How do we decide what is real and what is not? And, most importantly, how do we teach this to our children? Again, in my youth, the printed word was expensive so it was more likely that something that was published had been vetted for its veracity.

So perhaps Poe’s statement is more ‘apropos’ (couldn’t resist) in the digital age. “Believe nothing that you hear and only one-half of what you see”. Because people don’t just *read* things on the internet, they see things. And deeper explanations and/or contextual cues, if they exist, can be easily missed as we follow the links away from the original topic.

But critical thinking doesn’t just apply to ideas. It applies everywhere and to all ages – from first forays into independent living (should I eat this tuna sandwich that’s been in my backpack for two days?) to medical treatment options, to any number of decisions.

As I said earlier, thoughts about critical thinking led me to other aspects of our strategic plan. Teaching critical thinking is not easy – how do you teach someone to actually challenge their own thoughts? That is where the other elements in our strategic plan tie in. Character attributes such as empathy, integrity and perseverance are essential to the process of critical thinking. And realizing that critical thinking is just one component in a positive process that includes creativity, collaboration and problem-solving hopefully removes the perceived restrictiveness that may encourage us to resist the concept.

Humans are social animals who have evolved to be pretty much devoid of any innate abilities except the ability to think and learn from each other. In the past, survival was based on physical tasks. But our children will be adults in a world when most, if not all, the tasks will be taken over by technology. The only realm left for humans will be a much more esoteric kind of thinking. Creativity, problem solving, and, yes, critical thinking – these are, and always have been, the abilities that define humans. We must ensure that we pass them along to our young.

Good News

Foundation Executive Director Wes MacVicar announced that Ministry level education representatives from the United Arab Emirates recently visited Avon Maitland to experience various inclusive practices and how to implement practices.

Trustee Rothwell brought greetings on behalf of the board to the graduation ceremonies at Listowel District Secondary School.

Trustee Schenk attended FE Madill SS graduation and reflected on what high school graduations were 150 years ago.

Student Trustee Update

Staff/Student Presentation

Organizational Update – Senior Staff

Director Walsh welcomed Manager of Communications Janice Richmond. Janice provided trustees with a brief bio of her background.

Director Walsh also noted changes to two superintendent's portfolios for this year. Next Generation Learning and AMDEC are now in Superintendent Morris' portfolio and Mental Health is in Superintendent Baker's portfolio.

Within Superintendent Morris' portfolio it was noted that System Principal Vince Trocchi now has responsibility in supporting AMDEC.

Public Delegations

There were no delegations.

MOTION TO RECEIVE CONSENT ITEMS

MOTION 2017 10 324

(C. Schenk – L. Geddes)

RESOLVED THAT the Consent Items be received.

CARRIED

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

CHAIR'S REPORT

Communication and Advocacy Plan 2017/2018

Chair Wagler presented the report. Trustee Schenk asked for a revision to the appendix. In the Letters section add 'and the Ministry of Education'.

MOTION 2017 10 325

(C. Schenk – R. Hunking)

RESOLVED THAT the Avon Maitland District School Board approve the Communication and Advocacy Plan for 2017/2018.

CARRIED

INFORMATION AND PROGRESS REPORTS

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Elementary Class Size Reporting – Requirements and Compliance

Superintendent Langis presented the report for information and confirmed compliance with requirements achieved in all areas. All Collective Agreement class size requirements have been met at this time. 92% of primary classes (grades 1 to 3) have 20 or fewer students. 100% of all primary classes (grades 1 to 3) and grade 3/4 classes have 23 or fewer students. The Board wide average size of full day kindergarten classes is 25.67, and the junior intermediate (grades 3/4 to 8) average class size is 25.57 students.

Staff Adjustments

Superintendent Langis presented staff adjustments for information.

OPSBA Update

Trustee Hunking reminded trustees of the Regional meeting on November 4th in Upper Grand District School Board.

Minutes from Board Committees

Audit Committee: June 20, 2017

SEAC: September 6, 2017.

Chair's Activity Update

Chair Wagler noted he has fulfilled the regular duties of the chair in attending regular board and committee meetings.

Correspondence

Letter from Trillium Lakelands DSB to Ministry of Education dated October 3, 2017 re Executive Compensation Framework

Vice-Chair Kent suggested Avon Maitland write a similar letter to the Minister of Education endorsing what Trillium Lakeland has suggested.

MOTION 2017 10 326**(A. Kent – R. Hunking)**

RESOLVED THAT the Board direct Chair Wagler to write a letter to the Minister of Education, copy to OPSBA and all other district school boards, requesting that the effective date for executive compensation program be September 1, 2017.

CARRIED**NEW BUSINESS**

At this time Chair Wagler expressed appreciation to Wes MacVicar who, for the past two years, has been the Board's Manager of Communications.

ANNOUNCEMENTS**Future Board Meetings** (at Education Centre unless otherwise noted)

- October 24, 2017 – 5:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Open Session, 6:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, 7:30 p.m. Regular Board Session
- October November 14, 2017 – 4:30 p.m. Audit Committee, 6:30 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, 7:30 p.m. Regular Board Session

Future Meetings/Events with Trustee Representation (at Education Centre unless otherwise noted)

- AODA: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 – 4:00 p.m.
- Huron Perth Student Transportation Services: Tuesday, October 17, 2017 – 4:00 p.m.
- PIC re School Council Orientation: Wednesday, October 18, 2017 – 6:15 p.m.
- SEAC: Wednesday, November 1, 2017 – 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION 2017 10 327****(N. Rothwell – C. Schenk)**

RESOLVED THAT this meeting be adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

CARRIED

Approved at Seaforth, Ontario
October 24, 2017

Randy Wagler
Chair of the Board

Dr. Lisa Walsh
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board