

AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Engage, Inspire, Innovate ... Always Learning

MINUTES

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, OPEN SESSION AND
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

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

PRESENT:

Trustees: Lynette Geddes, Robert Hunking, Alyson Kent, Julie Moore, Doug Pratley, Nancy Rothwell, Colleen Schenk, Al Sygrove, Randy Wagler

Senior Staff: Lisa Walsh, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board, Superintendents Jodie Baker, Kim Black, Paul Langis, Jane Morris, and Associate Superintendent Cheri Carter

Student Trustee: Natalie Moore, Jesse Russell

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 5:03 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CLOSED SESSION

MOTION 2018-04-10-398

(L. Geddes – A. Sygrove)

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

CARRIED

Vice-Chair Robert Hunking was Chair for the Committee of the Whole, Closed Session.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, OPEN SESSION

Approval of Agenda

The following revisions were made to the Agenda for Open Session:

3.3.2 Initial Review of Policy 9

MOTION 2018-04-10-399

(A. Sygrove – L. Geddes)

RESOLVED THAT the Agenda of the Avon Maitland District School Board Open Session meeting be approved as amended.

CARRIED

Creating Pathways to Success for AMDSB Students

Superintendent Baker introduced Student Success Coordinator Stacy Somerville. Superintendent Baker noted the role of the Student Success Coordinator is to support many departments in the system and the student success leads. Stacy Somerville talked about the Student Success Pathways team and how they support classroom teachers, the variety of resources and opportunities for students and staff, and the Ministry's document Creating Pathways to Success. Grades 7 to 12 students can document

their learning through their individual Pathways Plan by using MyBlueprint. Grades JK to 6 students are encouraged to create an All About Me portfolio.

Review of Policy 6 re Role of Trustee

Trustees reviewed the edits to section 4.2 of the policy. Trustees discussed various practices for communication regarding concerns and issues brought forward from an individual or groups. Trustees agreed to bring any additional edits for further review at an upcoming board meeting.

Initial Review of Policy 9 re Board Governance By-Laws

Trustee Geddes has suggested a review of section 1.5 and 1.6 regarding the election of the OPSBA delegate and alternate delegate. The suggestion is to move the OPSBA election from May to the last board meeting in June on years that there is no school board/municipal election. Trustees will do a fulsome review of Policy 9 at an upcoming board meeting.

RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION

MOTION 2018-04-10-400

(C. Schenk – R. Hunking)

RESOLVED THAT this Board reconvene into Regular Session at 7:40 p.m.

CARRIED

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

The following revisions were made to the Agenda for Regular Session:

- 1) Trustee Geddes asked to take the Letter from Bluewater District School Board out of the Consent Items
- 2) Add Item 4.3 Approval of Consent Items

MOTION 2018-04-10-401

(A. Sygrove – J. Moore)

RESOLVED THAT the Agenda of the Avon Maitland District School Board meeting be approved as amended.

CARRIED

Approval of Consent Items

Trustee Geddes did not participate in the vote

MOTION 2018-04-10-402

(D. Pratley – C. Schenk)

RESOLVED THAT the Consent Items be approved as presented.

CARRIED

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

No trustees made a declaration of pecuniary interest.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION 2018-04-10-403

(A. Kent – R. Hunking)

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Avon Maitland District School Board meeting held Tuesday, March 27, 2018 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 Hunking noted there was nothing to report from Closed Session.

Trustee Reflection – Trustee Doug Pratley

So, how we doin'? That is not a rhetorical question; it is the title of my reflection.

As most of you know, my grandkids have been educated for the last two and a half years in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Our expectation was that they would receive an education much like here in Ontario; after all Australia is an advanced, Commonwealth nation. Let's compare education in NSW or more broadly, Australia and Ontario or more broadly, Canada.

Comparisons are *odious*. One becomes either jealous or smug but this short, unscientific comparison is focused on *what we can learn*.

First some background: education in Australia is state based (there are small variations from state to state, my observations are from NSW), attendance is compulsory from ages 6 to 15, there is one Kindergarten year, two post-secondary streams - TAFE (technical and further education) and university, almost all schools require the wearing of a school uniform, literacy tests are administered every other year to all grades, there are no school boards, students have the right to attend their local school but must apply to attend elsewhere.

There are public schools – funded by the state with some *non-compulsory* parent/guardian fees and private schools with some state funding but virtually supported by very high tuition fees (up to \$20K/student/year). There is a plethora of private schools – boarding, same sex, curriculum emphasis, religion based etcetera – 40 to 60% of Australian kids are educated in private schools!

As with any education system there are dissenters. They decry poor participation in math and science courses, low teacher standards and remuneration, poor early learning opportunities (they are available but costly), monolingual instruction and that immigrant and international students *actually raise* Australia's international scores. Let's look at those international scores. PISA results (Program for International Student Assessment) from tests administered by OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), in 72 countries in 2015 (available at www.oecd.org/pisa). Bear in mind that this is only one indicator of system effectiveness.

Country rank out of 72:

	Math	Reading	Science
Canada	10	3	7
Australia	25	16	14
United States	41	24	25

(Remember what I said earlier about being smug)

I visited two schools, spoke with one principal, many parents and a few kids. So these observations are *not* scientific and *not* statistically valid. Here are 4 of my observations. There were many good and interesting things to observe but I have chosen those that inform my "lessons".

1. The system is based on reward and punishment. There are constant comparisons. It is highly competitive; there is little cooperative learning. Students are *publically* ranked in most subjects and classes from #1 to #24 (for example). When I asked the principal what she felt might be the effect on kid #24, she said that their ranking "should inspire and motivate them to do better".

Engage, Inspire, Innovate ... Always Learning

2. There is a rigid attitude towards evaluation. No individualization was evident and little effort to discover students' real needs and strengths. For example my grandson is in grade four. He reads at a grade eight level but he is in the *low* reading group because the way you demonstrate your ability to read is by reading aloud to the class. Gavin does not like reading aloud to a group.
3. PCCs (Parent Community Councils) control and guide school based decisions. These are well meaning people but with no school boards to set policy and parameters, problems arise. The PCC is concerned with "status" and aims to have the school rank high. They pressure administration and staff to do things that staff may not see as best. PCCs tend to be controlled by non-elected elite from the high socio-economic group of the community.
4. There is a lack of a level playing field, not just because of the public/private division. In the public school my grandkids attend, *non-compulsory* fees are used for enrichment programs and core curriculum "workbooks". If parents do not or *cannot* pay these fees, their child does not get a workbook and sits idly while their classmates work in these books *during class time*.

You can draw your own conclusions from these "observations" but here are *my* two lessons for Canadian trustees.

A publically funded system is the best way to assure equity and the best results for kids.

School boards, despite all of our woes and issues, play a vital role in education.

As trustees and administrators, we can get frustrated or disappointed that we *cannot* do all that we feel we could and should for our students. Of course we can always improve, but let's be thankful for the visionaries who came before us and live among us...

How we doin'? Very well thank you.

Good News

Trustee Geddes announced on Thursday, March 29th she had attended the United Way Perth-Huron Spirit of Community Celebration along with Vice-Chair Hunking and Director Walsh. On behalf of the Board, Director Walsh accepted an award recognizing Avon Maitland as one of the top 20 workplaces in the counties.

Superintendent Black announced the Riverside Rural Learning program participated in the KW Christian Home Educators Conference on April 7th to engage community partners in our district. Over 850 people attended the event. Superintendent Black extended appreciation to the staff for their continuous active outreach to our communities.

Superintendent Black announced students from the 6C class at Goderich Public School, led by teacher Heather Durnin, participated in a live video-conference connecting with other classes around the Great Lakes. The webcast called 'Kids Meet the Great Lakes' connects classes from different geographic regions each month. The students put their use of technology towards a presentation of Lake Huron and the town of Goderich. Congratulations to teacher Heather Durnin and the 6C class.

Trustee Schenk noted there are many enthusiastic parents on the Maitland River ES parent council. There is a Billion Words Committee that planned some special activities throughout the month of March. The Committee introduced a billion-word challenge and today students have already read over 45 million words. An excellent idea to increase reading at home and at school.

Student Trustee Natalie Moore announced Goderich District Collegiate Institute, Listowel District Secondary School and Stratford Central Secondary School will be performing at the National Theatre School Drama Festival Regionals from April 15th to 21st.

Trustee Sygrove attended the Pathways Night held at Central Huron Secondary School on April 5th. Trustee Sygrove extended congratulations to the organizers and the presenters for hosting a very worthwhile event. Superintendent Baker added that a focus over the past week has been to introduce students in grades 4 to 6 to the skilled trades. Ironworker Jamie McMillian was present to speak to students about the various possibilities in the skilled trades. On May 2nd there will be another Pathways Night held at the Stratford Rotary Complex. Central Huron Secondary School hosted a

'Fun Tech' day where elementary students attended hands-on workshops in robotics, wood working, cooking with a Fanshawe College chef, and an interactive workshop called Funny Money.

Superintendent Baker reported, through support of the International Education program, Avon Maitland has again funded a partnership with the Stratford Festival Theatre 'My Academy'. Workshops with the Stratford Festival began in February, and on April 14th My Academy will showcase 'Us and Them'. Admission is free.

Student Trustee Update

Student Trustee Russell reported the annual OSTA AGM will be held from May 24th to 27th in Toronto. Student Trustee Moore advised that the new student senators will be attending the Student Symposium on May 11th.

Student / Staff Presentation

There was no student or staff presentation.

Public Delegations

There were no delegations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Consent Items:

- a) Approval of Tender: Mechanical Upgrades at Listowel District Secondary School

INFORMATION AND PROGRESS REPORTS

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS:

Staff Adjustments

Retirements/Resignations

Catherine Beierling	Stephen Central PS	Teacher	June 30, 2018
Kim Ryckman	Stephen Central PS	Teacher	June 30, 2018
Maria Bickley	Upper Thames ES	Teacher	June 30, 2018

New Hires

Sarah Stright	Education Centre	Communications Associate	April 16, 2018
---------------	------------------	--------------------------	----------------

OPSBA Update

Trustee Schenk reported three trustees were able to attend the Regional meeting held on April 6th hosted by Bluewater District School Board. There was a review of modules from OPSBA and the indigenous lead from Bluewater DSB presented.

Vice-Chair Hunking reported the second half of the meeting was spent reviewing the GSN release and provincial budget and how it affects school boards. Trustees reviewed priorities for OPSBA for 2018/2019.

It is election time at OPSBA and call for nominations has been posted on the OPSBA website. The OPSBA Labour Relations conference is scheduled for April 26th and 27th.

Minutes from Board Committees

The following Committee minutes were received:

SEAC – March 7, 2018

Senior Staff Update

Superintendent Black provided a brief update regarding the research that is being conducted by Brock University regarding inclusion. Brock researchers will be presenting at a future SEAC meeting at the Education Centre as well as to the Board in June. The dates for these meetings are to be confirmed.

Superintendent Black announced the Battle of the Bots is again being hosted by D&D Automation in Stratford on April 11th. Twenty elementary schools will be participating. This has become an annual event where students are interacting and competing in various robotic challenges.

Communications Manager Richmond announced a board-wide 'Jersey Day' will be held on Thursday, April 12th in recognition and support for the families and communities of Humboldt, Saskatchewan following the fatal accident involving the Humboldt Broncos junior hockey team on April 6th.

Correspondence

- a) From Chair Wagler dated March 3, 2018 to Minister Indira Naidoo-Harris re feedback on the Preliminary Accommodation Review Guidelines
- b) From Bluewater District School Board dated April 4, 2018 re Provincial Think Tank

Trustee Geddes asked for the letter from Bluewater District School Board to be removed from Consent Items in order to discuss whether the board was in support of the resolution. Trustee Pratley noted that OPSBA had rejected the motion and they had stated that is a function that is already performed by OPSBA. Trustee Geddes suggested that while trustees are reviewing suggestions for OPSBA 's key priorities this motion could be reviewed again.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice-Chair Hunking asked if administration is considering a modified school year calendar for 2018/2019. A report from the School Year Calendar Committee will be presented at the April 24th board meeting. There is no recommendation for a modified calendar.

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

- April 24, 2018 – 6:30 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, 7:00 p.m. Student Advisory Committee, 7:30 p.m. Regular Session
- May 8, 2018 – 5:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, 6:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Open Session, 7:30 p.m. Regular Session

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

- AODA: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 – 4:00 p.m.
- Information Sessions for Potential Trustees: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 – 7:00 p.m. in Central Huron Secondary School Library; Wednesday, April 18, 2018 – 7:00 p.m. in Stratford Northwestern Secondary School Library
- School Year Calendar Committee: Monday, April 23, 2018
- Joint Health & Safety: Thursday, May 31, 2018 – 1:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION 2018-04-10-404

(N. Rothwell – L. Geddes)

RESOLVED THAT this meeting be adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

CARRIED

Approved at Seaforth, Ontario
Date approved

Randy Wagler
Chair of the Board

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