



**Education Policy Development Committee
June 1, 2015 - Tolmie Building, Board Room**

Regular Minutes

Present: **TRUSTEES**
Deborah Nohr, Chair
Tom Ferris
Diane McNally
Peg Orcherton
Rob Paynter
Jordan Watters

ADMINISTRATION

Sherri Bell, Superintendent of Schools
Pat Duncan, Deputy Superintendent
Shelley Green, Associate Superintendent
Janine Roy, District Principal of Learning Initiatives
Deb Whitten, District Principal, Student Services
Elaine McVie, Principal of James Bay Community School
Lindsay Swan, Vice-Principal of James Bay Community School
Jeff Mitchell, Principal of South Park Family School
Jesse Bradbury, Principal of S.J. Willis Education Centre
Sean McCartney, Vice-Principal of S.J. Willis Education Centre
Willow Mak, Student Representative
Connie Schmidt, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Chair Nohr recognized and acknowledged the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories we live, we learn, and we do our work.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Trustee McNally asked that three notices of motion be added to the June 1, 2015 agenda as Item 9: Notice of Motions.

It was moved:

That the June 1, 2015 amended regular agenda be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - *May 4, 2015*

It was moved:

That the May 4, 2015 Education Policy Development Committee Meeting regular minutes be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

- 3. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - none**
- 4. PUBLIC REQUEST TO THE COMMITTEE - none**
- 5. CORRESPONDENCE REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE - none**
- 6. MOTIONS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE - none**
- 7. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS - none**
- 8. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Introduction of Student Representative

Superintendent Sherri Bell introduced Student Representative Willow Mak from the S. J. Willis Education Centre. She explained that Willow is a member of the Representative Advisory Council of Students who will be attending the Board meetings scheduled in the month of June 2015. Willow shared that she feels honoured to be the S.J. Willis student representative and is looking forward to a new learning experience. She thanked the committee for the opportunity to add her student voice to the meeting.

B. Coastal Kindergarten Update

Janine Roy, District Principal of Learning Initiatives, gave a brief overview of the Coastal Kindergarten program. She explained that this was the first year of the two-year pilot with two Kindergarten classes of 20 students located at both James Bay Community School and South Park Family School. Ms. Roy explained that the Coastal Kindergarten program had a very positive impact on students as reported by teachers, parents and students. While a program review will take place in the fall, this was a night for celebration of the program's first year. She then introduced James Bay Coastal Kindergarten teacher Susan Shemilt and Carol Eby, South Park Family School Coastal Kindergarten teacher. The teachers provided an overview of activities and learning experiences that occurred throughout the school year. Ms. Shemilt and Ms. Eby described what a regular day in the life of a Coastal Kindergarten student looks like. They outlined the provincial curricular-based program which connects real-life literacy, numeracy, science and social studies

activities, inquiry-based learning, Aboriginal ways of learning and knowing, and environmental stewardship into the outdoor-based Kindergarten program. They described the powerful impact of learning in an outdoor setting every morning on their students' self-confidence, learning, social/emotional development and physical development.

Denyse Zumach, a James Bay Community School Coastal Kindergarten parent, shared her child's positive learning experience and excitement with the trustees.

A question and answer period followed with trustees expressing their great appreciation and thanks for the excellent work done at both schools.

C. Communicating Student Learning

Shelley Green, Associate Superintendent, gave a brief overview of the FreshGrade Pilot. She explained that FreshGrade is a web application for communicating student learning that connects teachers, parents and students to student learning on an ongoing basis. Ms. Green introduced Strawberry Vale Elementary teacher Marjorie Ireton-Roach and McKenzie Elementary teacher Sarah Winkler, two teachers who have piloted FreshGrade in 2014-2015. The teachers shared their FreshGrade student portfolios with trustees. They explained how the FreshGrade web application can be used as a communication and reporting tool to instantly update parents on their child's learning, as well as providing opportunities for real-time interactions between students, parents and teachers. Ms. Ireton-Roach and Ms. Winkler shared that the FreshGrade app is an easy to learn and extremely useful tool in their daily work. Both teachers said that they receive very positive feedback from parents and students. Teachers observe less student anxiety around communicating student learning, and the immediate parent comments have a positive impact on the students' self-confidence in learning.

A question and answer period followed, and trustees expressed their appreciation of and support for the FreshGrade application.

Ms. Green then provided trustees with an update on the work being done by the Elementary Report Card Working Committee on elementary report card templates. The Working Committee has collaboratively developed K - 5 report card templates, which will be available to teachers in the fall of 2015. Based on the templates recommended by the Working Committee, the District's IT Department is creating a web application for elementary report card templates. The web application will be student-centered, easy to use, easy for parents to read and provide flexible options for teachers such as 'drag and drop' options and 'pull down' menus. Ms. Green expressed her great appreciation for the collaborative work being done by educators in our District and IT staff.

Trustees expressed their appreciation of the work of the Elementary Report Card Working Committee on the report card templates.

D. Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

Superintendent Sherri Bell provided trustees with an update on the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and asked that trustees send any input they may have to the secretary treasurer's office prior to the Operations, Policy and Planning Committee meeting on June 8, 2015.

E. Policy 5141.22: Concussion Awareness

Deb Whitten, District Principal, Student Services, presented Policy 5141.22: Concussion Awareness. The Concussion Committee, comprised of GVTA members, a CUPE 947 member, a representative from the Allied Specialist Association, Victoria Parent Advisory Committee, Trustee Paynter, Trustee Orcherton, a School Principal, Associate Superintendent Cam Pinkerton and District Principal, Students Services, met on four occasions to complete the draft policy through a collaborative process. Throughout the process, the committee utilized existing concussion-related documents and referred to Dr. Stanwick for his feedback and suggestions. Discussion took place.

It was moved:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) adopt Policy 5141.22 Concussion Awareness.

Motion Carried Unanimously

F. Responding to Student Needs Initiatives

Superintendent Sherri Bell explained that the District will implement a number of initiatives to address various needs of our vulnerable students. Deb Whitten then provided the committee with an overview of the following initiatives:

- i) J.W. McConnell Well Ahead Initiative is a district-wide initiative which aims to advance students' social and emotional well-being. The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation is seeking BC districts that have a passion to advance students' social-emotional well-being to become pilot districts in the 'Well Ahead Initiative'. The foundation is looking for communities that want to draw upon multiple perspectives and work with community partners to foster a sense of collective ownership of the well-being of children and youth. The expression of interest form has been submitted.
- ii) The Take a Hike Program is a full-time alternative education program that engages at-risk youth through a combination of adventure based learning, academics, therapy and community involvement. The Take a Hike Foundation would like to explore the possibility of expanding its program into GVSD #61 at S.J. Willis for 2016-2017.

- iii) Victoria Youth Clinic addresses students' mental health issues and helps families navigate the support system. The Youth Clinic would like to open a clinic in one of our secondary schools to address youth mental health and to support our Aboriginal students.
- iv) HLL SPARK Update will be multi-age, passion/strength-based, flexible learning initiative with high parent/family involvement. The intention of this initiative is to support students facing challenges associated with stress and anxiety, as some of these learners find it difficult to engage in a traditional school setting and in the current alternatives being offered at SJ Willis.

9. Notice of Motions

Trustee McNally presented the following notice of motions:

That all Trustees appointed by the Chair to an external body be required to submit a written report to the Board via the Chair in December and June of each school year, as part of the Trustee Report agenda item, reports to be included as part of the Board agenda packup, beginning December 2015.

That Trustee representatives to outside bodies elected by the Board be required to submit written reports to the Board via the Chair after every meeting the Representative attends, reports to be part of the Board agenda packup.

That each Trustee (one Trustee agreed upon by consensus in multi-Trustee committees) be required to submit a written report to the Board via the Chair in December and June of each school year, as part of the Trustee Report agenda item, reports to be included as part of the Board agenda packup beginning December 2015.

10. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved

That the meeting adjourn.

Motion Carried Unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.