

Present:

Lyn Hall, Chairperson	Brian Pepper, Superintendent of Schools
Trish Bella, Vice-Chairperson	Allan Reed, Director of Finance
Lois Boone, Trustee	Wendy De Marsh, Executive Assistant (Recorder)
Valentine Crawford, Trustee	
Roxanne Ricard, Trustee	
Sharel Warrington, Trustee	
Rhonda White, Trustee	

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

One item was added to the agenda – Item 13, New Business. The agenda was approved as amended.

3. **PUBLIC INPUT**

Karen Welch, representing the Coalition of Rural Education Sustainability (CORES), commended the Board for forming a committee of the whole to review transportation issues and asked that it consider every other possible option before either cutting bus routes or charging parents for bussing.

Linda Naess, representing the Prince George District Teachers' Association, noted that the following day was the Day of Pink – International Day against Bullying, Discrimination and Homophobia and that March 5 was International Women's Day. She also invited trustees to participate in the district professional development day on March 4.

Josh Hewitt and Rob McDougall, representing the District Student Advisory Council, gave an update on the council's last meeting and reported that the council would be forwarding recommendations for revisions to Policy 5133.2 (District Student Advisory Council) to the Policy and Governance Committee.

Don Sabo, representing the District Parent Advisory Council, expressed concern about the possibility that the Board might begin charging parents for bus service. He also commented on the improvements in the district's school completion rates, particularly for Aboriginal students, and asked the Board to

look into how many “Evergreen” certificates were being issued, as opposed to the regular “Dogwood” certificates.

4. **SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS**

There were no news items.

5. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

5.1 Public Meeting

The minutes of the regular public meeting of February 8, 2011, were adopted with the following corrections:

- In Item 10.4, the addition of a note that the Springboard to Success Scholarship Committee oversaw ten awards, not six.

5.2 Record of In Camera Meeting Minutes

The report on the items discussed and decisions made at the in camera meeting of February 8, 2011, was approved.

6. **PRESENTATIONS**

6.1 City of Prince George Official Community Plan

Dan Milburn, Manager of Long-Term Planning for the City of Prince George, gave a presentation on the city’s review of its official community plan. He explained that the city would like the Board’s input on five key questions, those being:

- Actual and anticipated needs for school facilities and support services?
- The size, number and location of the sites anticipated to be required for school facilities?
- The type of school anticipated to be required for these sites?
- When are the school facilities and support services anticipated to be required?
- How will the existing and proposed school facilities relate to existing and proposed community facilities in the area?

Trustees asked a number of questions of Mr. Milburn. It was noted that the district was experiencing declining enrolment, which had resulted in the closure of schools throughout the city, and that it was therefore unlikely that approval would be obtained from the Ministry of Education for any new schools in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Hall indicated that trustees would meet with senior administration to discuss the five questions and would respond to them in writing.

6.2 Prince George Retired Teachers' Association Education Heritage Committee

Marj Niehaus, Chairperson of the committee, presented the Board with a copy of its recently published book, *School District No. 57 Historical Memories*, and introduced Barb Hall, who was one of the book's editors.

Ms. Niehaus reported that the first school in Prince George had opened 100 years ago. She explained that the RTA's education heritage committee existed for the sole purpose of preserving the educational history of the district, and that its collection now totalled more than 10,000 items.

7. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

7.1 Committee of the Whole – Transportation Review

Ms. Bella noted that at its public meeting on February 8, 2011, the Board had agreed to meet as a committee of the whole to discuss two questions, which were:

- Does the Board wish to increase or decrease transportation service levels in the district?
- Is there an interest in charging a fee to parents for transportation?

She reported that the meeting had been held on February 12 and that she had been asked to "rise and report" on behalf of the committee.

Ms. Bella reported that at the meeting, the committee had reviewed a great deal of data and had reached the following conclusions:

- That student transportation is complex.
- That the school district's work in this area is efficient.

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- That there is no desire to change transportation service levels, other than those changes made as a result of the regular work of administration.
 - That there is no desire to charge fees to parents for transportation.

She presented, as motions, two recommendations from the committee.

MOVED:

That senior administration continue to review efficiencies in student transportation.

CARRIED.

This motion was discussed at some length. Some of the points raised included:

- That the funding received from the Ministry of Education for student transportation had been frozen for many years, and that the district's transportation costs exceed the funding it received.
- That the Management and Finance Committee would be reviewing the district's transportation budget along with all other areas of the district's operations when it developed the budget for the 2011-12 school year.
- That the Northern Interior Branch had forwarded a motion to the B.C. School Trustees' Association's annual general meeting regarding the issue of inflationary costs related to student transportation.
- That, with its large rural area, part of the district's responsibility was getting children to school.

MOVED:

That no fees be charged to parents for student transportation.

CARRIED.

It was noted that the district was not required to provide transportation services for students. However, there was general agreement that it was an important service for the district's many rural students.

The Board moved to Item 13, New School Name, and then returned to Item 8 and dealt with the rest of the agenda in order.

8. EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

8.1 Committee Report

Ms. Boone reported that in addition to the items being brought forward to the Board, at its last meeting the committee had received a report on research being done in the district.

8.2 Board Authorized Course: Outdoor Pursuits 11

Derrick Shaw, principal of McBride Secondary School, reviewed the proposed content of the course and the rationale for offering it, via video-conference from McBride.

MOVED:

That Outdoor Pursuits 11 be approved as a Board authorized course.
CARRIED.

8.3 Board Authorized Course: Outdoor Recreation 12

Matt Thompson, a teacher at Prince George Secondary School, explained his rationale for developing the course and gave a brief outline of it.

MOVED:

That Outdoor Recreation 12 be approved as a Board authorized course.
CARRIED.

8.4 Board Authorized Course: Soccer 11

Rob Wood, a teacher at Prince George Secondary School, gave an overview of the course and his reasons for developing it.

MOVED:

That Soccer 11 be approved as a Board authorized course.
CARRIED.

9. POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

9.1 Committee Report

Mr. Crawford reported that the committee had devoted all of its last meeting to a review of Bylaw No. 1.

9.2 Notice of Revisions to Bylaw No. 1

Mr. Crawford noted that the Board had directed the committee to review Bylaw No. 1, specifically the sections related to inaugural meetings, committee structure and participation and the use of Robert's Rules. He reported that the committee had completed its review and was recommending some minor changes.

MOVED:

That the proposed revisions to Bylaw No. 1 be considered at the public meeting scheduled for March 22, 2011.

CARRIED.

Some concerns were expressed about the proposed changes. There was some discussion, but debate was set aside until the March 22 meeting.

10. **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

10.1 Superintendent's Report on Class Size

Mr. Pepper reviewed the report, dated February 10, 2011, which was provided as a handout. He expressed pride at being able to report that the district had only six secondary school classes, and no elementary school classes, with more than 30 students in them.

MOVED:

That the Superintendent's report on the organization of classes in School District No. 57, as of February 10, 2011, as required under Section 76 (3) of the *School Act*, be accepted.

CARRIED.

10.2 2011-12 District Calendar

It was noted that, as had been the district's practice since 2007, a committee of partner group representatives had been convened to discuss the calendar for the coming school year and had based its discussions on the recommendations contained in the School Calendar Committee Report dated January 24, 2007. In accordance with those recommendations, because the ministry's spring break in 2012 does not coincide with the Easter long weekend, a two-week break was not being recommended.

MOVED:

1. That the district's spring break in 2012 coincide with the provincial spring break, as per the Ministry of Education's standard school calendar.
2. That the spring break in 2012 be one week long.
3. That the ministry non-instructional day be scheduled on Tuesday, September 6, 2011, and that the first day of school for students be Wednesday, September 7, 2011.

CARRIED.

The proposed district calendar for 2011-12 was reviewed. It was noted that the dates for non-instructional days had been determined in consultation with the Prince George District Teachers' Association.

MOVED:

That the proposed local school calendar for 2011-12 be adopted.

CARRIED.

11. TRUSTEE REPORTS

11.1 BC School Trustees' Association

Mr. Crawford reported that the next Provincial Council meeting was scheduled for the upcoming weekend.

It was agreed that a report on the recent annual general meeting of the Northern Interior Branch be postponed to the next meeting.

11.2 District Student Advisory Council

Mr. Crawford reported that the time and date of council meetings was being changed so that students did not have to miss classes in order to attend and that it was hoped this would increase the level of student participation.

12. ATTACHMENTS FOR INFORMATION

12.1 Revisions to Administrative Procedures – Policy 5119 (School Catchment Areas and Student Transfers)

Mr. Crawford reported that the recent revisions to Policy 5119 had resulted in a need for additional administrative procedures to be developed and that, in accordance with Policy 8310 (Policy and Policy Development), these procedures had been approved by senior administration and were being provided to the Board for information.

A concern was raised that Policy 8310 might be out of date and might also be in conflict with another Board policy.

MOVED:

That Policy 8310 be referred to the Policy and Governance Committee for review.

This motion was discussed. There was general agreement that the Board should be more specific in its direction to the committee with regard to what aspects of the policy it wished reviewed.

MOVED:

That this motion be postponed to the public meeting of April 26, 2011.
CARRIED.

13. **NEW BUSINESS**

13.1 New School Name

Mr. Hall noted that on March 30, 2010, the Board had made the decision to close Central Fort George Traditional School, effective June 30, 2011. It had been agreed that the school and Spruceland Elementary School should enter into consultation regarding the transition of the traditions program to Spruceland.

Assistant Superintendent John McLay reported that the principals of the two schools had led the two school communities (students, parents and staff) through a process of consultation and information-sharing regarding the relocation of the program and that through this process it had been decided that Spruceland Traditional Elementary School should be the school's new name and that it should be a single-track traditional school.

MOVED:

That Spruceland Elementary School be renamed Spruceland Traditional Elementary School, effective September 1, 2011.
CARRIED.

It was acknowledged that school closures and amalgamations were not easy for anyone involved, and the parents, staff and administrators of the two schools were commended for working to make the transition as smooth as possible.

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.