



Excellence In Education

MEMORANDUM

Date: 05 April 2011
To: Board of Trustees
From: Tim Monds – Superintendent of Schools
Originator: Kelly Wilkins, Deputy Superintendent
Subject: **Communications Committee Minutes**

Recommendation

That the Board of Trustees receives as information, the unadopted Communications Committee Minutes of 08 March 2011 as presented at the Regular Meeting of 05 April 2011.

/ds



**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT THE PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION
CENTRE FOR EDUCATION IN STONY PLAIN, ALBERTA ON
MARCH 08, 2011.**

ATTENDANCE:

Christine Sauer - CAAMSE Representative
Charlene Daub – ATA Local #10 Representative
Amar Mohabir – ATA Local #10 Representative
Jay McGeough – IOUE Business Agent
Natalie Dzioba – NUG Representative
Ron Heinrichs – Board of Trustees Representative
Irene Goebel – Board of Trustees Representative
Kelly Wilkins – Deputy Superintendent
Margaret Jacob – Manager, Human Resources
Darlene Smith – Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. followed by introductions.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF 16 NOVEMBER 2010

Natalie Dzioba moved that minutes of 16 November 2010 be accepted as presented. All in favor. Carried

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA

No deletions or additions.

SYSTEM REVIEW

The purpose of the facilities, boundaries and program locations review is to develop a long term planning framework that addresses the following:

- Changing demographics across the Division indicate that the population and enrolments are declining in some areas and increasing at a rapid rate in other areas.
- Changing demographics have resulted in an imbalance between facility capacity with current and projected enrolments.
- A lack of provincial funding for requested new school space has resulted in over-capacity at some schools, current and projected.
- A limited capacity to add core portable classrooms to school facilities and sites has created space issues in some schools.

The purpose of the Public Information Open House – Phase I was to display information on the:

- System Review purpose
- Process plan and schedule
- Existing and projected enrolments, school capacity and utilization
- System Review planning principles
- Existing boundaries

Based on public feedback received from System Review Phase 1; System Review Phase 2 Open Houses provided storyboards highlighting the purpose; Phase 2 process plan and schedule; System Review revised planning principles;

The following strategies were presented as possible ways to reduce overcrowding at schools with growing enrolments by:

- limiting cross boundary students
- optimizing space by creating additional internal spaces
- adding core portable classrooms if provincial funding is available, and the facility and site can accommodate the additional classrooms
- boundary changes

Any changes to school boundaries, for the 2011-2012 school year will be decided at the April Board meeting. The schools affected most by high enrolment include Millgrove, Brookwood and High Park which require immediate attention. Less critical situations (such as high school enrolments and schools in the west zone) will be considered in the future.

Trustee Ron Heinrichs indicated that Open Houses were well presented, rolled out well, and gave stakeholders an opportunity to provide input through comment sheets. The Board has tried to be very transparent and engage the community in the decision making process.

Trustee Goebel also reiterated that very positive remarks were received from people.

DIVISIONAL PRIORITIES

The Board of Trustees, in principle, approved the division priorities. Two of the priorities are a continuation of what PSD has been pursuing in the past - pedagogy which includes developmentally appropriate curriculum and assessment, and citizenship and social responsibility. The third priority that will more directly involve the Trustees is the whole notion of the system review, a continued focus that PSD is dealing with changing demographics. At the Education Planning sessions in January, this was validated in terms of people seeing the importance and significance of this.

FOLLOW-UP FROM MEETING OF 16 NOVEMBER 2010

Scent Awareness

Kelly Wilkins brought this item forward to Senior Executive, had a conversation with Human Resources, and it was discussed at community meetings with Principals. The conversations focused on strategies for acknowledging this. Some schools have informal practices in place to make sure people are respectful of those with scent allergies. These informal practices have certainly heightened awareness.

Charlene Daub asked if PSD had a policy on allergy “free”. Kelly Wilkins indicated PSD has an administrative procedure. Life threatening allergies focuses primarily around the medical piece of anaphylaxis. The expectations of PSD are that parents work most closely with their child’s school to handle specific allergies. Each school community ensures the greatest degree of safety for everyone. PSD workplaces and schools may be peanut aware – not peanut free. It would be impractical to have an allergen free school as we cannot control with 100% certainty what allergens come into our school or when sensitivity to an allergen would affect a member of the community.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Kelly asked for the wisdom of this group as to the future of Communication Committee meetings. Although Kelly has only been involved with meetings this year, Tim Monds indicated that very few agenda items were forthcoming in the preparation of each meeting. Kelly asked those in attendance if there was value in continuing to have this group meet. She asked if the Communication Committee had run its course. Are there other ways to ascertain information being shared?

- Natalie – we can get information from other sources. Other than when Humanicare comes on an annual basis, she didn't recall any significant agenda items.
- Christine – communication has changed. Information is always being passed along either through On-line, the PSD website and/or Inside PSD.
- Margaret – PSD has good relationships with CAAAMSE, IOUE and NUG. The ATA Teachers/Board Advisory Committee meets regularly. When issues arise, they are dealt with.
- Jay - If important information continues to be forthcoming to him, (eg. Board meeting information) that would be most appreciated.
- Kelly - would never think of discontinuing the Communications Committee if it would create a void in communication.
- Ron – Do we make it all or nothing? Would there be value in meeting once a year? The key is to revisit that communication is still happening – more of a check in.
- Irene – asked if we could still get an annual report from Humanicare.
- Amir – meetings have limited value and are not an appropriate venue for bringing up issues.
- Kelly – time to make a change. Ron & Irene will communicate to the Board, the Committee's recommendation to discontinue the Communications Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm