

PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Governance and Policy Committee of the Peel District School Board, held in the Brampton Room, the H. J. A. Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga, Ontario on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 17:30 hours.

Members present:

Lucas Alves
Karla Bailey (17:35 hours)
Susan Benjamin
Jeffrey Clark
Brad MacDonald
Kathy McDonald

Also present:

Will Davies
Jill Promoli

Administration:

Kathryn Lockyer, General Counsel and Governance Officer (Executive Member)
Donna Ford, Superintendent of Education
Masuma Khangura, Executive Officer, Human Resources, Partnerships and Equity
Sabrina Valteau, Governance Coordinator

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. Call to Order

General Counsel and Governance Officer, Kathryn Lockyer called the meeting to order. She welcomed everyone to the first Governance and Policy Committee Meeting since the Organizational Meeting of the Board, and noted that the meeting will be livestreamed, recorded, and posted on the Board's website.

2. Land Acknowledgement

A video of the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands was viewed.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Internal Auditors, Tony Ronca and Carlo Avolio, were present to act as scrutineers.

Executive Member, General Counsel and Governance Officer, Kathryn Lockyer called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee. She noted that the elections are for a two-year term.

Trustee Lucas Alves nominated Trustee Brad MacDonald.

There were no further nominations.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair (Continued)

The nomination of Brad MacDonald for the position of Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee was moved by Lucas Alves and seconded by Jeffrey Clark.

GC-01, moved by Lucas Alves
seconded by Karla Bailey

Resolved, that the nomination for the position of Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee be closed.

..... carried

Trustee MacDonald was acclaimed as Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee.

Kathryn Lockyer called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee.

Trustee Brad MacDonald nominated Trustee Lucas Alves.

There were no further nominations.

The nomination of Lucas Alves for the position of Vice-Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee was moved by Brad MacDonald and seconded by Susan Benjamin.

GC-02 moved by Brad MacDonald
seconded by Susan Benjamin

Resolved, that the nomination for the position of Vice-Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee be closed.

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Trustee Lucas Alves was acclaimed as Vice-Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee.

4. Approval of Agenda

GC-03 moved by Susan Benjamin
seconded by Lucas Alves

Resolved, that the agenda be approved.

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5. Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

6. Minutes of the Governance and Policy Committee Meeting, September 14, 2022

GC-04 moved by Jeffrey Clark
seconded by Susan Benjamin

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Governance and Policy Committee Meeting, held September 14, 2022, be approved.

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7. Review of Policy 27: Naming of Schools – Update #3

Superintendent of Education, Donna Ford, reviewed the report and stated that Policy 27 emerged from Directive 18, which requires that the Board undertake a comprehensive diversity audit of schools, including naming of schools. She provided background information of the work done and the purpose of the policy to support the process of naming or renaming of schools, facilities, or special function areas. Reviewing the policy, Donna Ford outlined the roles and responsibilities and approval process for naming or renaming of schools, which includes community engagement.

Chair MacDonald recalled a discussion at the Governance and Policy Committee meeting of September 14, 2022, where members had expressed their preference that schools are not be named after people. He commented that this suggestion has not been reflected in the policy. He inquired as to the criteria for choosing a school name, clarity on what the community engagement will involve, and titles of who will sit on the Naming Committee. The administration provided clarification on the process for approval of school names outlined in the policy and noted that details of the process will be included in an accompanying Operating Procedure. Kathryn Lockyer advised that a Community Engagement Framework is being developed. Lengthy discussion ensued and trustees' questions and comments included: in future avoid using names of individuals for school naming, particularly after employees or trustees; conduct thorough research if considering naming of a school after a worthy individual who is no longer living and provide criteria for selection, inclusion of language, culture, achievements, community; whether existing schools already named after people will be changed or retained; clarification and/or definition of special function area; a flowchart will provide more clarity on the process.

GC-05 moved by Lucas Alves
seconded by Karla Bailey

Resolved, that, Policy 27: Naming of Schools, be referred to staff for revisions as follows:

- a) Prohibiting the use of individual's names in the naming or renaming process for schools, special function areas, and facilities in the future;
 - b) Incorporating the comments from trustees regarding community consultation process, criteria for selection of school names, definition of special function area, and titles of members on the Naming Committee.
- (APPENDIX I, Item 7.1 of the agenda)

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8. Disconnecting from Work Policy

Masuma Khangura, Executive Officer, Human Resources, Partnerships and Equity, referred to an amendment to the Employment Standards Act 2000 (ESA) requiring employers with 25 or more employees to have a written policy for disconnecting from work. Reviewing the report, she highlighted that the purpose of the Policy is to provide a framework to support employees in disconnecting from work outside of working hours, to support work-life balance and well-being, and to develop and maintain a positive and healthy workplace culture. Masuma Khangura stated that independent and dependent contractors are excluded from this policy, and the policy prohibits reprisal for disconnecting from work. She stated that responsibility for management of this Policy rests with the Director of Education or their designate, responsibility for coordination and day to day management is assigned to the Executive Officer, Human Resources, Partnerships and Equity, and responsibilities of managerial staff and employees will be set out in an Operating Procedure.

Masuma Khangura responded to trustees' questions of clarification regarding: having a alternate point of contact available for staff who have Out of Office notification; the policy addresses responsibilities for managers and supervisors due to emergencies; notification that although emails may be sent after office hours, responses are not expected out of office hours; out of office hours tasks are incorporated in the terms and conditions of specific roles; remote working option is still being offered to some staff for Peel DSB to remain competitive in the market; clarification between service delivery and the right to disconnect from work.

GC-06 moved by Lucas Alves
seconded by Jeffrey Clark

Resolved, that the Governance and Policy Committee recommends to the Board:

That, the report be received and the Disconnecting from Work Policy (Appendix A of the report), be approved. (APPENDIX II, Item 7.2 of the agenda)

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9. Trustee Staff Relations Policy

General Counsel and Governance Officer, Kathryn Lockyer presented the draft Trustee Staff Relations Policy. She explained that the purpose of the policy is, to guide the nature of the working relationship between Peel DSB members and staff at all times, on and off site, and is a good governance tool for respectful and productive relationships between trustees and staff. She reviewed the draft policy, highlighting the process for bringing a matter to the attention of staff through a member of the Leadership Team, what members can and cannot do, communications between members and staff, notification on media inquiries and significant events, requests for advice from the General Counsel and Governance Officer, monitoring of adherence to the policy and reporting in aggregate terms. Kathryn Lockyer stated that research done to develop this policy includes an environmental scan, guidance from the Municipal Act, Trustee Codes of Conduct, and Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPPSBA) Good Governance Guide.

9. Trustee Staff Relations Policy (Continued)

In response to a trustee’s question regarding consequences for members who do not adhere to the policy, Kathryn Lockyer advised that in addition to the policy which sets goals and expectations, operating procedures may be developed to include a formal complaint process. She added that the Trustees’ Code of Conduct will be reviewed later in this term of office and could be expanded to include complaints from staff and the public. Responses to questions of clarification from trustees included: Executive Leads are Department Heads; the policy is new and not mandated by the Education Act; informal complaints have been received but there is no formal trustee-staff relations policy; information on incidents occurring at schools is shared with trustees based on compliance with other policies; other school boards do not have a similar policy; this policy responds to Directive 5 regarding good governance; the annual reporting will be public and non-specific. Discussion ensued following a suggestion to submit the policy to OPSBA for review and feedback, and trustees’ questions regarding process were responded to by Kathryn Lockyer.

GC-07 moved by Lucas Alves
seconded by Jeffrey Clark

Resolved, that the Board approve sending the Trustee Staff Relations Policy (Appendix 1 of the report) to the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association (OPSBA) for review and response within a one-month time period, following which the Policy is brought back to the Governance and Policy Committee. (APPENDIX III, Item 7.3 of the agenda)

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10. Trustee Notices of Motion

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Plagiarism Policy

Trustee Alves submitted a Notice of Moton and requested that the motion be dealt with immediately.

GC-08 moved by Lucas Alves
seconded by Karla Bailey

Resolved, that staff bring a report to the next Governance and Policy Committee meeting on the status of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Plagiarism Policy in relation to artificially generated content via software.

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Trustee Alves spoke of plagiarism as it exists and the widely accepted definition of plagiarism respecting AI, content or communication pieces created by a machine that produces content through coding, which is not recognized as plagiarism. He expressed his concerns and explained how it could pose a problem for Peel DSB in the future. In view of the Governance and Policy Committee meetings being scheduled on a quarterly basis, it was agreed that the motion be dealt with today.

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GC-08 carried

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11. Adjournment

GC-09 Moved by Susan Benjamin
 Seconded by Jeffrey Clark

Resolved, that the meeting adjourn (19:55 hours).

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..... Chair