

## PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Governance and Policy Committee of the Peel District School Board, held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 17:38 hours. The meeting was held by electronic means, under Ontario Regulation 463/97, as amended.

Members present:

Kathy McDonald, Vice-Chair  
Carrie Andrews  
Robert Crocker  
David Green

Also present:

Will Davies  
Sue Lawton

Members absent: (apologies received marked \*)

Brad MacDonald\*  
John Marchant, Chair

Administration:

Kathryn Lockyer, General Counsel and Governance Officer (Executive Member)  
Donna Ford, Superintendent of Education  
Mary Zammit, Acting Superintendent of Education  
  
Nicole Fernandes, Board Reporter

**1. Call to Order**

In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair McDonald presided, and called the meeting to order.

**2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands**

The Land Acknowledgement was read.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

GC-11            Moved by Carrie Andrews  
                      Seconded by Robert Crocker

Resolved, that the agenda be approved.

..... carried

**4. Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**5. Minutes of the Governance and Policy Committee Meeting, June 15, 2022**

GC-12            Moved by Robert Crocker  
                      Seconded by Carrie Andrews

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Governance and Policy Committee Meeting, held June 15, 2022, be approved.

..... carried

**6. Policy Development and Review Framework**

General Counsel and Governance Officer, Kathryn Lockyer, recalled discussion at the June 2022 Committee meeting regarding the Policy Management Program, which will provide a coordinated approach to develop consistent, comprehensive and compliant policies. LaShawn Murray, Policy Analyst, noted that the overall goal of the Program is to implement a framework for a systemic approach to the development, review, approval, and repeal of policies. She indicated that the Policy Development and Review Framework document, attached to the Board Report, is a foundational element to the Program. The Framework will set naming and numbering conventions, identify and address gaps, and ensure that procedures are updated and ladder up to a parent policy. In addition, it will help to ensure policies are: compliant with relevant legislation and align with the Board's vision, goals and priorities; accessible with respect to language and availability; viewed through anti oppression, human rights, equity, and anti racist lens; include community engagement, when applicable. LaShawn Murray highlighted next steps in regard to finalizing the design template and naming and numbering conventions, developing a periodic review schedule, and establishing the process for approval of procedures within the Board.

GC-13            Moved by Carrie Andrews  
                      Seconded by Robert Crocker

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

That, the report be received and the Policy Development and Review Framework (appended to the report), be approved. (APPENDIX I, Item 6.1 of the agenda)

..... carried

**7. Trustee Family Leave Policy**

Kathryn Lockyer advised that the Education Act mandates that school boards adopt and maintain policies regarding pregnancy leave and parental leave for members of the board of trustees. Historically, PDSB does not have such a policy specifically for trustees. Providing contextual information, she stated that the Act specifies instances when trustees vacate their seat, which includes an absence of more than three consecutive board meetings without authorization by the board. She advised that Section 228 of the Education Act outlines an exception whereby a vacancy does not occur if the trustee's absence is a result of pregnancy, the birth of the trustee's child, or the adoption of a child by the trustee. Trustees are entitled to take a leave of absence from their duties for up to twenty consecutive weeks under this exception, and such family leave does not require approval or authorization by the Board. In response to questions, Kathryn Lockyer clarified that the policy or the exemption under the Act does not cover leave for child's sickness or for the birth or adoption of a grandchild. As trustees are not employees, legislation related to employment, such as the Employment Standards Act, do not apply. However, the Board may authorize a trustee's absence from more than three meetings, by passing a resolution to that effect.

GC-14            Moved by Robert Crocker  
                      Seconded by Carrie Andrews

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

That, the Trustee Family Leave Policy, (attached as Appendix I), be approved, effective November 15, 2022. (APPENDIX II, Item 6.2 of the agenda)

..... carried

**8. Policy 27 - Naming and Renaming of Schools, Special Function Areas and Facilities**

Superintendent of Education, Donna Ford, referred to Ministry Directive 18 which requires the Board to undertake a comprehensive diversity audit, including the naming of schools as well as names attached to mascots, libraries and classrooms. She reported that a review of the current Policy 27, Naming of Schools, was undertaken by the Directive 18 Working Group. The proposed revised policy provides a framework for naming and renaming of schools, special function areas and facilities. The framework includes the process for naming and ensures that consultation is undertaken by a committee of diverse members so that their perspectives and lived experiences are included in the decision-making.

Some members expressed their opinion that schools should not be named after people. A member suggested reviewing the police and fire departments' protocols, and naming schools after streets on which they are located, wherever possible. Further suggestions included that the process of naming and renaming should be public with the public providing input into the process, trustees should be involved in consultations, and there is a need for community and trustee consultations for naming of schools as well as for naming facilities and special function areas. Advising that the Working Group had discussed these comments and concerns, Superintendent Ford clarified that the proposed revised Policy outlines the intent, and the operating procedure which is yet to be written will include structures for community and public engagement.

**8. Policy 27 - Naming and Renaming of Schools, Special Function Areas and Facilities**  
(Continued)

GC-15 Moved by Carrie Andrews  
Seconded by Robert Crocker

Resolved, that the report re Policy 27 - Naming and Renaming of Schools, Special Function Areas and Facilities, be received, and that proposed revised Policy 27 be brought back to the Governance and Policy Committee, for review and recommendation.

..... carried

**9. Trustee Code of Conduct**

Apologizing for the lengthy delay in bringing forward the draft Trustee Code of Conduct, Kathryn Lockyer reported that the delay was initially because of the expectation that the province would draft a school board code of conduct template. She confirmed that if the Ministry does provide some guidance, the Trustee Code of Conduct will be brought back to the Board for consideration. The consultant, Sheila McKinnon of Shibley Righton LLP, has also apologized for the delay. It was noted that the proposed Trustee Code of Conduct will be brought to the October Board Meeting, to allow more time for trustees to review it in detail and provide further comments. Reviewing the report, Kathryn Lockyer highlighted Ontario Regulation 246/18 which requires school boards to have a code of conduct for trustees in place before May 2023, and review it at least every four years. The draft code was prepared by the consultant along with Lori Barnes, who was the provincially appointed Parliamentarian. Kathryn Lockyer advised that she and the Integrity Commissioner were also consulted. Reporting that the Ontario Public School Boards' Association's code of conduct template guided the development of PDSB's code, Kathryn Lockyer outlined the draft code, which addresses standards for acceptable and respectful behaviour, provides a framework for professional conduct and responsibilities, and demonstrates how trustees have determined to regulate themselves. The Code consists of three parts: principles and directions; complaint protocol; method of retaining the Integrity Commissioner (IC). The Code is for use by trustees only, and the Integrity Commissioner will report annually to the Board on their activities in respect of the Code.

Kathryn Lockyer responded to members' questions of clarification regarding: the rationale for trustees not being permitted to use emails and contact information acquired during the course of discharging their duties as trustee; need for explicit language in the social media section that all complaints are to be processed through the Integrity Commissioner; final reports of an IC investigation are to be provided within 90 days; the complaint protocol will be followed by the IC even if a trustee refuses to be involved in an investigation; need to explicitly state circumstances for termination of the IC; application of the Code to the Audit Committee because of its decision-making authority; circumstances when use of Board resources or staff violates the Code of Conduct; investigation of trustees for behaviour in previous terms; anonymous complaints will not be investigated by the IC and the identity of witnesses will be protected; developing a procedure to ensure the independence and transparency in hiring the IC.

**9. Trustee Code of Conduct** (Continued)

GC-16 Moved by David Green  
Seconded by Carrie Andrews

Resolved, that the Governance and Policy Committee recommends that the Trustee Code of Conduct be brought to the October 2022 Board Meeting for approval.

..... carried

**10. Adjournment**

GC-17 Moved by Carrie Andrews  
Seconded by Robert Crocker

Resolved, that the meeting adjourn (18:55 hours).

..... carried

..... Chair