

PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Governance and Policy Committee of the Peel District School Board, held on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 17:32 hours. The hybrid meeting was held in the Brampton Room, the H. J. A. Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga, Ontario, and by electronic means, under Ontario Regulation 463/97.

Members present:

Brad MacDonald, Chair
Lucas Alves, Vice-Chair
Karla Bailey
Susan Benjamin
Jeffrey Clark (electronic)
LeeAnn Cole, (ex-officio) (electronic)
Kathy McDonald (electronic)

Trustees also present:

Stan Cameron
Will Davies
Jill Promoli
Srishti Sekhri, Student Trustee

Administration:

Kathryn Lockyer, General Counsel and Governance Officer (Executive Member)
Camille Logan, Associate Director, School Improvement and Equity, Curriculum and Instruction, Student and Community Engagement
Wendy Dobson, Controller, Corporate Support Services
Tiffany Gooch, Executive Lead, Public Engagement and Communications

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. Call to Order

Chair MacDonald called the meeting to order.

2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

The Land Acknowledgement was read.

3. Approval of Agenda

Item 7.2, Trustee Staff Relations Policy, was withdrawn from the agenda.

GC-51 moved by Karla Bailey
seconded by Susan Benjamin

Resolved, that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

..... carried
2/3rds' majority

4. Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

5. Minutes of the Governance and Policy Committee Meeting, June 7, 2023

GC-52 moved by Jeffrey Clark
seconded by Lucas Alves

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Governance and Policy Committee Meeting, held June 7, 2023, be approved.

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6. Delegation by Salma Mustafa re Development of an Explicit Grade Acceleration Policy for Peel DSB

The delegation did not attend the meeting.

7. Referred Motion – Secondary Final Evaluations

GC-53 moved by Karla Bailey
seconded by Kathy McDonald

Resolved, that the report re Secondary Final Evaluations, be received.

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Coordinating Principal, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Sumble Kaukab, recalled that the report on Secondary Final Evaluations was presented at the Curriculum, Equity and Student Well-Being Committee on March 8, 2023, based on the communication disclosed for 2022-2023 school year. She stated that Rasulan Hoppie, Superintendent of Secondary Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, addressed some concerns raised by the Committee and had advised the Committee that Final Evaluations were being implemented and brought back for the 2023-2024 school year.

Responses to trustees' questions of clarification included: weighting for Grades 9 and 10 secondary courses can include a final exam up to 10% of the final course grade and Grades 11 and 12 can include up to 20%; in Ontario, final examinations, including any culminating activity can be weighted up to 30% of the final grade for Grades 9 – 12. In reply to a concern, Sumble Kaukab explained that the evaluations comprise a combination of skills and knowledge, and preparation still requires students to have all pre-requisites independent of the weight of the exam. The trustee asked for consideration to ensure that students leaving PDSB and pursuing future pathways will be sufficiently prepared for examinations which have a higher threshold than 20%, to support student success in post-secondary education. The comment was taken under advisement.

7. Referred Motion – Secondary Final Evaluations (Continued)

Further questions of clarification from trustees were responded to regarding: students will continue to engage in examinations, however the weighting has been adjusted in order to use other evaluation methods for students to demonstrate their knowledge; research shows that when using multiple ways of demonstrating student learning, positive outcomes emerge. Comments and suggestions from trustees included communication on the secondary evaluation process through Parent Information Nights, lowering the weightage of secondary school examinations appears to be lowering the bar for students, there may be opportunity for students to use artificial intelligence for homework that is part of the evaluation, and there is no evidence to show that lowering or raising the percentage of exams affects the performance in post-secondary studies. Some trustees conveyed concerns from their constituents regarding lowering the weightage of exams at secondary level and indicated that it may impact student performance in post-secondary institutions. Camille Logan offered to take the concerns under advisement and to better inform parents at the school level.

Responding to the query on lack of trustees' involvement on this matter, General Counsel and Governance Officer, Kathryn Lockyer explained that, historically and currently, the decision is guided by the Ministry document 'Growing Success' which sets out criteria for the curriculum and how evaluations will be conducted in terms of percentage of assignments and examinations as part of the final mark. According to the guidelines set by the Province, school board administration is allowed to use their discretion to use different methods of evaluation for the various courses. Kathryn Lockyer provided background information on why this report was brought for review to the Governance and Policy Committee and noted that it is not within the purview of trustees to be involved in operational matters. Further discussion ensued and some trustees spoke in favour of using multiple ways of evaluating students, depending on the courses, while other trustees conveyed parents' concerns and strong opposition to the shift in evaluation methods. A trustee suggested a public consultation on the topic to invite feedback from the parents.

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GC-53

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8. Social Media Policy

Executive Lead, Public Engagement and Communications, Tiffany Gooch, recalled that the initial report was developed in June 2022. She stated that in view of the changing nature of social media, an annual review of the policy is recommended. Reviewing the report, Tiffany Gooch advised that an environmental scan was conducted with other school boards and government organizations to review information. Findings indicated a significant number of hate posts, and approaches to deal with posts on various platforms are being considered. Tiffany Gooch highlighted the General Principles in the Social Media Policy which guide staff to be mindful of all equity and inclusivity-related board policies and the Ontario Human Rights Code when posting content on social media.

8. Social Media Policy (Continued)

GC-54 moved by Jeffrey Clark
seconded by Kathy McDonald

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

That, the revised Social Media Policy, be approved and replace the existing Social Media Policy. (APPENDIX I, Item 7.3 of the Governance and Policy Committee Agenda)

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9. Excursions Policy

Coordinating Principal, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Sumble Kaukab, presented the revised Excursions Policy which applies to all Peel DSB approved curricular and extra-curricular activities involving students that take place off school property. She advised that the policy covers all staff and stakeholders, including third party providers and volunteers. Sumble Kaukab reviewed the report, highlighting that the policy ensures equity of access and opportunity, provides advance notice to parents, and prioritizes safety of students. A trustee expressed support for removing the financial barrier to access programs.

Responses to trustees' questions of clarification and comments included: possibility of covering the criminal reference check fee for volunteer parents can be addressed in the Operating Procedure (OP); inclement weather procedures are addressed in the student transportation policies and procedures; staff work with families in need to discreetly address financial constraints, which will also be addressed in the OP; excursion destinations are chosen in relation to curriculum.

GC-55 moved by Lucas Alves
seconded by Susan Benjamin

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

That, the Excursions Policy, be approved and replace the existing Policy 17. (APPENDIX II, Item 7.4 of the Governance and Policy Committee Agenda)

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10. Trustee Honoraria Policy

Kathryn Lockyer, General Counsel and Governance Officer, stated that Ontario Regulation 357/06 requires an annual revision to the Trustee Honoraria Policy to reflect updated enrolment amount. Policy 72 has been revised, indicating the honoraria for the period November 15, 2023 to November 14, 2024. She added that the amount is based on the base amount of \$1.75 per Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) and amounts to a total of \$27,852.44.

10. Trustee Honoraria Policy (Continued)

The amounts for the Chair and Vice-Chair are recognized for extra work and are paid an additional amount, while the student trustees have a fixed amount of \$2500 per year.

GC-56 moved by Kathy McDonald
seconded by Karla Bailey

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

That, the revised Trustee Honoraria Policy pertaining to the year November 15, 2023 – November 14, 2024, be approved effective November 15, 2023, and that Policy 72 – Trustee Honoraria pertaining to the period December 1, 2022 to November 14, 2023, be repealed. (APPENDIX III, Item 7.5 of the Governance and Policy Committee Agenda)

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11. Policy #71 Video Surveillance (Security Cameras in Schools/Sites)

Controller of Corporate Support Services, Wendy Dobson, stated the program will provide for student and staff safety and deter vandalism and other destructive acts. She advised that Policy 71 has been revised to include additional language from the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) with respect to notice, access, use, disclosure, retention, and disposal of records containing personal information. In addition, definitions have updated in relation to retention periods and video surveillance systems, and roles and responsibilities have been adjusted to align with privacy considerations.

A trustee inquired about the release of surveillance video footage to the Discipline Committee. General Counsel and Governance Officer, Kathryn Lockyer, explained that there are two aspects related to video footage, one from security cameras installed and the other from students' devices, which will be addressed in the guidelines for Discipline hearings as well as Operating Procedures in the future.

GC-57 moved by Karla Bailey
seconded by Susan Benjamin

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

That, the Video Surveillance Policy (formerly Security Cameras in Schools), be approved. (APPENDIX IV, Item 7.6 of the Governance and Policy Committee Agenda)

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12. Policy Management Program: Annual Report 2023

Policy Analyst, LaShawn Murray, advised that the report outlines the activities and accomplishments for the Policy Management Program during the 2022-2023 school year. She stated that the goal of the program is to develop and implement a framework for policy and procedure development in compliance with legislation, to align with Peel DSB’s vision, goals, and priorities, include input from the community, and reflect the Board’s commitment to equity and inclusion. Providing statistics on the work done under the program, LaShawn Murray reported that next steps will include: finalizing a periodic review schedule; implementing new naming and numbering conventions for policies and procedures; redesigning the intranet and Peel DSB web pages for posting policies and procedures; building capacity of responsible offices on policy and procedure development and review.

GC-58 moved by Jeffrey Clark
seconded by Lucas Alves

Resolved, that the report re Policy Management Program: Annual Report 2023, be received.

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13. Communications

1. Memo re Days of Significance and Scheduling of External Examinations

Kathryn Lockyer stated that the memo is in response to a question raised at the previous Governance and Policy Committee meeting regarding examinations being scheduled by third parties on Days of Significance. She advised that the Peel DSB Days of Significance Calendar does not apply to externally scheduled examinations as Peel DSB does not schedule the external organization exams.

GC-59 moved by Lucas Alves
seconded by Kathy McDonald

Resolved, that the Memo re Days of Significance, be received.

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14. Motion by Trustee Bailey re Student Transportation

GC-60 moved by Karla Bailey
seconded by Lucas Alves

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

Whereas, the Peel District School Board has a policy regarding transportation (Policy 39);

And whereas, Transportation Policy 39 specifically provides that transportation shall not be provided to Regional Learning Choices programs;

14. Motion by Trustee Bailey re Student Transportation (Continued)

And whereas, Peel families have made requests to the Peel DSB to provide student transportation to Regional Learning Choices programs;

Therefore be it resolved, that staff report with a review of Transportation Policy 39 and the Regional Learning Choices Program Policy 64 in relation to student transportation and possible solutions starting in the 2024-2025 school year;

And further, that the Peel DSB work with STOPR to propose updates to the eligibility requirements for student transportation to be included in the report;

And further, that the report include estimated budget impacts of the inclusion of student transportation options for Regional Learning Choices programs;

And further, that the report come back to a future meeting of the Governance and Policy Committee.

..... carried

15. Adjournment

GC-61 Moved by Susan Benjamin
 Seconded by Karla Bailey

Resolved, that the meeting adjourn (19:18 hours).

..... carried

..... Chair