

RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 30, 2024

at 3:12 PM

Chairperson S. Humphries in the Chair.

TRUSTEES Present: L. Boland; D. Dobson (early departure); K. Dougherty; M. Guenette; D. Kaiser (early departure); J. Primeau (early departure)

TRUSTEES Absent (With Regret): C. Ruddy; A. Beggs & G. Ding (Student Trustees)

STAFF: K. Niemi; J. Barnes; J. Poirier; R. Cousineau; J. Smith; K. Riddell; M. Caplan Jamieson; S. McIntyre; H. MacMillan

STAFF Absent (With Regret):

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson S. Humphries called the meeting to order.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Trustee J. Primeau read the Territorial Acknowledgement.

3. INVOCATION

The invocation was read by Vice-Chairperson L. Boland.

4. ATTENDANCE

Attendance for today's meeting was recorded.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY D. KAISER seconded by K. Dougherty that the Renfrew County District School Board approves the agenda order for today's meeting.

The motion was CARRIED

6. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Chairperson S. Humphries asked for declarations of conflict. None were forthcoming.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED K. DOUGHERTY seconded by L. Boland that the Renfrew County District School Board confirms the minutes of the Special Board Meeting (Closed) on December 8, 2023.

The motion was CARRIED

8. PRESENTATION – A Focus on Early Literacy

Superintendent J. Smith introduced Shelley Gagne (Principal of Program Services K-6), Brenda Leggo (Teacher at Herman Street PS), Courtney Werger (Literacy Intervention Support Teacher), Natascha O'Brien (Literacy Intervention Support Teacher), Kendra Frolande (Literacy Intervention Support Teacher), Lorie Mason (Bilingual Literacy Coach), Natalie Lubitz (Bilingual Literacy Coach), and Jordan Sloan (Bilingual Literacy Coach).

The presentation focused on Early Literacy with a connection to Ministry directives and the Work Action Plan. The team provided an overview of the system-level and classroom-level work that is in place to develop

foundational skills in reading. Connections to the new Language Curriculum and the Ministry PPM were made. Examples of the work that is happening in our schools was shared, including a hands-on learning activity. Trustees and Senior Staff participated in led by Brenda Leggo.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS TO THE BOARD

Program & Student Achievement Committee

Trustee M. Guenette, Chairperson of the Program & Student Achievement Committee, presented the Open Session Report of the Program & Student Achievement Committee meeting held on January 16, 2024.

MOVED BY M. GUENETTE, seconded by D. Kaiser that the Renfrew County District School Board adopts the Open Session Report of the Program & Student Achievement Committee meeting held on January 16, 2024.

The motion was CARRIED

Committee of the Whole Open Session Report – January 30, 2024

Vice-Chairperson L. Boland, Chairperson of Committee of the Whole, presented the Open Session Report of Committee of the Whole from today's meeting.

MOVED BY L. BOLAND, seconded by K. Dougherty that the Renfrew County District School Board adopts the Open Session Report of the Committee of the Whole meeting.

The motion was CARRIED

Committee of the Whole Closed Session Report – January 30, 2024

Vice-Chairperson L. Boland, Chairperson of Committee of the Whole, presented the Closed Session Report of Committee of the Whole from today's meeting.

MOVED BY L. BOLAND, seconded by D. Dobson that the Renfrew County District School Board adopts the Closed Session Report of the Committee of the Whole meeting.

The motion was CARRIED

Special Education Advisory Committee

Trustee M. Guenette presented the Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on January 17, 2024.

MOVED BY M. Guenette, seconded by D. Kaiser that the Renfrew County District School Board receives the Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on January 17, 2024.

The motion was CARRIED

Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Last week, Chairperson S. Humphries, Vice-Chair L. Boland and Trustee K. Dougherty attended the Public Education Symposium (PES), engaging in two full days of learning and networking. The symposium covered various topics including the rationale behind Trustees' work, seminars on the benefits of food programs in schools, a presentation focusing on Indigenous perspectives, discussions on emotional intelligence, and panels on collaboration with municipalities. There were also sessions addressing Human Rights and Equity, as well as the challenges faced by rural school boards. Director Niemi, Executive Officer of Public Affairs Caplan Jamieson and Superintendent Poirier also attended various sessions such as French as a Second Language (FSL), addressing antisemitism in schools and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Indigenous Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Vice-Chair L. Boland provided a summary of the Indigenous Education Advisory Council meeting held on January 23, 2024. The Board Action Plan for Indigenous Education was reviewed. IEAC also participated in a Collaborative Activity.

MOVED BY L. BOLAND, seconded by M. GUENETTE that the Renfrew County District School Board receives the Report of the Indigenous Education Advisory Council meeting held on January 23, 2024.

The motion was CARRIED

10. **UPDATES**

(a) Director

Director of Education K. Niemi presented her Director’s Report. See Appendix “A”.

(b) Chair

Board Chairperson S. Humphries presented her Chair’s Report. See Appendix “B”.

(c) Student Trustees

Student Trustees Report was included in the agenda package. See Appendix “C”.

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The draft version of a letter to the Minister of Education regarding concerns with Bill 98 – *Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act* was tabled and will be brought forward at the February 27, 2024 Board meeting.

Chairperson S. Humphries referenced copies of letters received from: the Minister of Education – Toronto Youth Cabinet, the Minister of Children, Community & Social Services - Toronto Youth Cabinet and the Halton Catholic DSB - Request for Greenhouse Gas Reduction.

12. **OTHER BUSINESS**

None to report.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED BY S. HUMPHRIES seconded by L. Boland that the Renfrew County District School Board meeting of January 30, 2024 be adjourned. Time: 4:41 PM

The motion was CARRIED



PROGRAM AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE

Open Session: X

Closed Session:

REPORT TO BOARD

January 16, 2024

PRESENT:	Committee Members:	M. Guenette (Chair), D. Dobson, K. Dougherty (virtual), C. Ruddy (virtual), L. Boland, S. Humphries, D. Kaiser, J. Primeau, A. Beggs (Student Trustee – virtual)
	Administration:	K. Niemi, R. Cousineau, J. Poirier, J. Barnes, K. Riddell, J. Smith, M. Caplan-Jamieson, S. McIntyre, H. MacMillan, A. Garcia
	Guests:	K. Recoskie, S. Gagne, J. Sloan, N. Lubitz
ABSENT:	(With Regrets)	G. Ding (Student Trustee)

The Program and Student Achievement Committee met on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 to discuss the following item(s):

1. Annual Action Plan for School Effectiveness and Student Success
2. 2024-2025 School Year Calendar
3. School Naming Committee Report

The following recommendations were made:

1. 2024-2025 School Year Calendar

WHEREAS the Ministry of Education requires the RCDSB develop a school year calendar that follows the guidelines set out in the Education Act and the annual guidance provided by the Ministry of Education, we recommend THAT the Board of Trustees approve the RCDSB 2024-2025 School Year Calendar as presented in this report.

2. School Naming Committee Report

That the Board approved the recommended name, Madawaska Valley District School, as presented by the School Naming Committee.

M. Guenette
Chairperson

ADOPTED - January 30, 2024

RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
OPEN SESSION REPORT
January 30, 2024**

TRUSTEES: (Present)	L. Boland (Chair); S. Humphries; D. Dobson; M. Guenette; D. Kaiser; J. Primeau; K. Dougherty
TRUSTEES (Absent): STAFF (Regrets):	C. Ruddy; A. Beggs & G. Ding (Student Trustees)
STAFF: (Present)	K. Niemi; J. Barnes; J. Poirier; R. Cousineau; J. Smith; K. Riddell; M. Caplan Jamieson; S. McIntyre; H. MacMillan; T. Hoffman
STAFF: (Absent with Regrets)	

The Committee of the Whole of the Renfrew County District School Board met on January 30, 2024 and discussed the following items in Open Session:

- 3.1 Trustee Vacancy;
- 3.2 Year-to-Date Financials 2023-2024;
- 3.3 Deficit Elimination Plan 2023-2024;
- 3.4 Menstrual Equity Project.

The following recommendations were made:

Deficit Elimination Plan 2023-2024

THAT the Renfrew County District School Board approve the 2023-2024 Deficit Elimination Plan.

Menstrual Equity Project

THAT the Renfrew County District School Board endorse the initiative to send a letter of support.

I move that the Board adopts this report.

Leo Boland
Chairperson

ADOPTED - January 30, 2024



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Open Session: x
Closed Session:

REPORT TO BOARD January 17, 2024

PRESENT: Committee Members: M. Guenette, S. Tait, C. Brash, L. Rigby, M. Wagner,
J. Francis, S. Ward, N. Tabbert

ADMINISTRATION: J. Smith, A. McGregor, S. Smith, A. Hilts

GUESTS: K. Niemi, B. Murray

ABSENT: (With Regrets) D. Lacombe, A. MacKenzie

The Special Education Advisory Committee met in person and virtually on Wednesday January 17, 2024 and discussed the following:

1. Staff Updates - SEAC Handbook
2. Report from the Board
3. Association Reports

No recommendations were made.

Amy MacKenzie,
Chairperson

ADOPTED - January 30, 2024



Board Meeting
Director's Update - Kristen Niemi
January 30, 2024

Wow, what an incredible month it has been! I've had the absolute pleasure of diving into the vibrant world of our schools, meeting the amazing students and staff who make up the heart of our community. A huge shoutout and heartfelt thanks to everyone for the warm welcome—I couldn't be more thrilled to be part of the dynamic RCDSB team!

The energy in our schools has been contagious, with December buzzing with activities, and the excitement isn't slowing down! Central Public School hosted an educational Family Math Night on January 19th. Cobden Public School is gearing up for not one, but two nights of High School Musical Junior on February 21st and 22nd. Be sure to grab your tickets at the door—it's going to be a show to remember!

Every year, January 27th marks International Holocaust Remembrance Day, and it's crucial, now more than ever, that we stand united against antisemitism. Our commitment to Holocaust Education is unwavering—it's embedded in the Grade 6 and 10 curriculum, and we're encouraging educators to weave it into every grade throughout the year. Let's foster understanding and empathy in our schools and communities.

As we step into February, RCDSB honours Black History Month. Learning about Black history and celebrating Canadian Black Brilliance isn't just a one-month activity—it's a year-round commitment. Kudos to Amy Johnson, our incredible Principal of Equity, Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression, and the dedicated teachers engaging in professional learning about this vital topic. In December, school leaders took part in a transformative session, "Going Beyond Black History Month."

And congratulations to our secondary students—Semester 1 is wrapping up, and in elementary, Term 1 is coming to a close. Assessment and evaluation are in full swing in both panels, and then report cards will be in your hands during the first weeks of February.

To all our students, families, and staff, we wish you an amazing second half of the school year! The RCDSB Executive Council is cheering you on for continued success!

Thank you.



Board Meeting
Chair's Update - Susan Humphries
30 January 2024

Welcome:

It has been an exciting start to the new year as we welcomed our new Director of Education, Kristen Niemi! She was able to join us on January 1st so it was nice to have a few days to get settled in and have some conversations with some trustees and staff before students and staff returned to schools. I know that Kristen has managed to visit quite a few schools already and she is looking forward to spending time with educators in all schools in the District. A sincere Ottawa Valley welcome is being extended across our District- thank you for making Kristen feel at home here.

Trustee Vacancy:

We are in the process of recruiting a trustee to work with the Petawawa Family of Schools and the Petawawa community. Thanks to our communications team, this information has been shared very broadly across the District and we have received several letters of interest - our closing date was yesterday (January 29th). All trustees will have an opportunity to review the written applications and make decisions on who we wish to interview personally. Hopefully we will have someone in place to present at the February meeting.

Public Education Symposium- an annual provincial conference:

This is always an excellent opportunity to learn more about the role of the trustee, how the education system works and network with trustees from across the province. Trustees Dougherty, Ruddy, Boland and I were able to attend and will be bringing a report- briefly today and more details in the future.

Information re past Trustee Nic Edge:

I had the opportunity to attend the funeral of Nic's Mom earlier this month. Many of you will know Nic not only as the elected trustee from the Arnprior area but also a student trustee for two years. He is currently studying in Thunder Bay with a goal of working in education. Our sincerest sympathies are extended to Nic and his family.



Student Trustees' Report for Tuesday, January 30, 2024

Report Prepared By: Ava Beggs and Grace Ding

Grace Ding

It has been an exciting first month of the new year! Unfortunately, I cannot be here today due to exams, but I look forward to seeing everyone again (and meeting our new school board director!) in February.

This month, I have been thinking about student mental health and brainstorming possible mental health initiatives. I have also collected information and RCDSB student testimonies regarding the menstrual products in our schools, and their importance.

I look forward to working with our Student Senate again in February!

In my work at OSTA-AECO as the Eastern Regional Representative for public school boards, I have been working on a short presentation and pamphlet about standardized testing across Ontario; the presentation and pamphlet will both be presented at OSTA-AECO's winter conference.