

APPROVED

MINUTES

The Special Meeting of the Board

June 24, 2020

A virtual Special Meeting of the Durham District School Board was held on this date.

1. Call to Order:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

Members Present: Trustees Chris Braney, Niki Lundquist, Christine Thatcher, Patrice Barnes, Michael Barrett, Paul Crawford, Donna Edwards, Darlene Forbes, Carolyn Morton, Ashley Noble, Scott Templeton, Student Trustees Sally Meseret, Arlene Wang and Tyler West

Officials Present: Acting Director Norah Marsh, Acting Associate Director Jim Markovski, Interim Associate Director Carla Kisko, Superintendents Georgette Davis, Margaret Lazarus, Jamila Maliha, Andrea McAuley, Heather Mundy, Stephen Nevills, Communications Manager Peter Blake, General Counsel Patrick Cotter

Regrets: Superintendent Mohamed Hamid

Recording Secretary: Karen Douglas

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this time.

Chair Chris Braney advised that, at the request of Student trustee Sally Meseret, the Student Voice Motion will be added to the agenda under Item 3. (b).

3. Recommended Actions

(a) Distance Learning Update #6

Acting Director Norah Marsh provided trustees with an overview of the memorandum and document received from the Ministry of Education on June 19, 2020, regarding the Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year. The document provides a general framework for consideration in local planning and sets specific due dates for planning to be complete and submitted to local public health departments. Plans need to be submitted to the Ministry of Education in July, for review and discussion and plans are due to local public health officials by August 4, 2020 for their input and approval. She highlighted information regarding the three possible attendance scenarios, EQAO assessments, literacy graduating requirements, community involvement hours, transportation, specialized equipment cleaning protocols, standard human resources practices, suspected COVID-19 exposure protocols, on-line board meetings, and student registration dates. She advised that draft plans for a return to school are underway and it is hoped that they will be ready for presentation to trustees at a Special Board meeting on July 8, 2020. Staff are actively working on preparing for the different scenarios outlined in the memo. She highlighted the summer institute that is being planned for educators, surveys that are being utilized to gather information from parents/students relating to their experiences in distance learning over the past several months, the position papers of ETFO and OSSTF, and federation relationships. The District continues to flag the importance of the modified school calendars with the Ministry, and it is hoped that information will be received shortly, as no school calendars have been approved to date. The District is asking families of students in modified schools whether they would prefer to resume remote learning initially and move to a physical presence when permission is received. The District continues to work with staff and local federations in terms of staff who have young children at home who will be returning to work, recognizing that this has already occurred for many families in the province in other sectors. Acting Director Norah Marsh responded to questions from Trustees.

(b) Student Voice Motion

Chair Chris Braney advised trustees that Student Trustee Sally Meseret will be proposing a motion regarding Student Voice. He noted that a mover and seconder is required prior to the motion being discussed.

Student Trustee Sally Meseret spoke to the motion highlighting its intent and outlining the elements contained within the motion. She also answered questions of trustees. Student Trustees Arlene Wang and Tyler West also spoke to the motion.

(b) Student Voice Motion (Continued)

General Counsel Patrick Cotter provided trustees with an overview of the requirements to amend By-Law #14 and the possible violation of Section 55 of the Education Act. A discussion ensued.

2020:79

MOVED by Trustee Ashley Noble

SECONED by Trustee Niki Lundquist

WHEREAS: STUDENT TRUSTEES ARE ELECTED TO REPRESENT ALL STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE DURHAM REGION.

WHEREAS: INVESTING IN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IS PART OF THE DDSB'S STRATEGIC GOAL TO EMPOWER LEADERS WITHIN THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD.

WHEREAS: STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 AND 8 HAVE DEMONSTRATED AN INTEREST IN BEING PART OF SCHOOL BOARD DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES, AND WHEN PRESENTED WITH THE CHANCE HAVE POSED QUESTIONS, ATTENDED STUDENT SENATE, AND HAVE ACTIVELY SOUGHT OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED WITH STUDENT ADVOCACY AND STUDENT LEADERSHIP AT THE BOARD.

WHEREAS: UNDER CURRENT PROCESS, STUDENTS IN GRADE NINE DO NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ELECT THE INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTING THEM AS SCHOOL BOARD STUDENT TRUSTEE.

WHEREAS: ENABLING STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 AND 8 TO VOTE FOR THEIR ELECTED STUDENT TRUSTEES WILL INCREASE ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT OF A DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVE IN ALL FACETS OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP AT THE BOARD.

WHEREAS: PROVIDING STUDENTS WITHIN ALL ASPECTS OF THE SYSTEM THE ABILITY TO MEANINGFULLY ENGAGE IN SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP PROCESSES ENABLES THEM TO BE AWARE OF OPPORTUNITIES AND GIVES THEM AMPLE TIME AND INSPIRATION TO BE ABLE TO PURSUE THEM AS THEY MOVE THROUGH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

WHEREAS: STUDENT TRUSTEES ARE INVITED TO SIT ON SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEES, HOWEVER ARE NOT ALWAYS ABLE TO BE IN ATTENDANCE.

(b) Student Voice Motion (Continued)

WHEREAS: STUDENT SENATORS ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS AND CURRENTLY ENGAGE IN SCHOOL BOARD WIDE LEADERSHIP.

WHEREAS: ELEMENTARY STUDENTS FACE UNIQUE CHALLENGES AND REQUIRE AN AVENUE TO SHARE THEIR COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCES TO INFORM POLICIES AND PRACTICES WITHIN THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD.

WHEREAS: PROVIDING MECHANISMS TO GARNER DIVERSE STUDENT VOICE WILL ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF STUDENT TRUSTEES, AND THE SCHOOL BOARD TO ASCERTAIN ACCURATE, INFORMED PERSPECTIVES PREDICATED ON A VARIETY OF STUDENT EXPERIENCES.

WHEREAS: ENGAGEMENT IS A STRATEGIC GOAL OF THE DDSB.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: STUDENT TRUSTEE ELECTION POLICY BE AMENDED FOR THE FRANCHISEMENT OF STUDENTS IN GRADE 7 TO VOTE IN STUDENT TRUSTEE ELECTIONS.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE POLICY BE AMENDED TO ENABLE STUDENT SENATORS TO SERVE ON COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD IN LIEU OF STUDENT TRUSTEES, IF APPOINTED BY THE STUDENT SENATE AND/OR STUDENT TRUSTEES TO PROVIDE INPUT AND UNIQUE PERSPECTIVES.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: A POLICY IS DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ELEMENTARY STUDENT SENATE FOR STUDENTS WITHIN UPPER ELEMENTARY GRADES TO PROVIDE STUDENT PERSPECTIVES, FEEDBACK, AND ADVOCACY AS IS ENGAGED IN BY THE EXISTING STUDENT SENATE.

MOTION RULED OUT OF ORDER

Chair Chris Braney ruled the foregoing motion (2020:79) of Trustees Ashley Noble and Niki Lundquist Out of Order based on General Counsel advice.

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4. Adjournment

2020:80

MOVED by Trustee Carolyn Morton

SECONED by Trustee Donna Edwards

THAT THE MEETING DOES NOW ADJOURN.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:02 p.m.

Chair

Secretary