

RAINBOW DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

held in person and electronically via Google Meet
and livestreamed from the Ernie Checkeris Boardroom
at the Centre for Education, 408 Wembley Drive
on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Trustees: D. Farrow (Chair), B. Clement, L. Corbiere-Addison, L. Debassige,
D. Dewar, A. Gibson, J. Hunda, J. Kosmerly, A. McCauley,
Student Trustee Nootchtai, Student Trustee Wilson-Zegil (via Google Meet)

Absent: nil

Officials: B. Bourget – Director and Secretary of the Board
A. Guilbault – Superintendent of Business
L. Fisher, M. McNamara, K. Wachnuk – Superintendents

Staff: N. Cecchetto, N. Charette, S. Clarke, T. Hayes, D. Kitching,
D. Koziar, L. Mantle, M. McKelvey, N. Nicolas-Bayer,
D. Peristeridis, C. Whitson

Chair Farrow called the meeting to order.

Director Bourget completed roll call to establish who was participating in the Google Meet.

A. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: 25-R36, J.Kosmerly/J.Hunda

That the agenda for the Regular Board meeting of January 21, 2025 be approved.

Poll vote

*Bob Clement: In-favour
Lisa Corbiere-Addison: In-favour
Linda Debassige: In-favour
Doreen Dewar: In-favour
David Farrow: In-favour
Anita Gibson: In-favour
Judy Hunda: In-favour
Judy Kosmerly: In-favour
Alex McCauley: In-favour*

- Carried

B. PRELIMINARY DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST NIL

C. PRESENTATIONS

Board Mental Health Plan

Director Bourget introduced Sarah Clarke, Mental Health Lead, who provided an update on the board's Mental Health Strategic Plan.

Sarah shared the vision for mental health, the guiding principles and the Ministry requirements, along with an overview of the 4 strategic priorities for mental health in our board and highlighted a few initiatives and strategies under each priority.

Trustees were given the opportunity to ask questions and thanked Sarah and her team for all the work they have done to move this forward.

D. REPORT FROM THE CLOSED MEETING OF THE BOARD

No meeting held. No report.

E. OLD BUSINESS

1. Previous Minutes

Motion: 25-R37, D.Dewar/A.McCauley

That the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 be approved.

Poll vote

*Bob Clement: In-favour
Lisa Corbiere-Addison: In-favour
Linda Debassige: In-favour
Doreen Dewar: In-favour
David Farrow: In-favour
Anita Gibson: In-favour
Judy Hunda: In-favour
Judy Kosmerly: In-favour
Alex McCauley: In-favour*

- Carried

2. Reports and Recommendations from Board Committees

Accessibility Planning Committee

Motion: 25-R38, J.Kosmerly/J.Hunda

That the Board approve the Multi-year Accessibility Plan 2023-2027, as recommended by the Accessibility Planning Committee.

Poll vote

*Bob Clement: In-favour
Lisa Corbiere-Addison: In-favour
Linda Debassige: In-favour
Doreen Dewar: In-favour
David Farrow: In-favour
Anita Gibson: In-favour
Judy Hunda: In-favour
Judy Kosmerly: In-favour
Alex McCauley: In-favour*

- Carried

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Revised Estimates 2024-2025

Superintendent Guilbault reviewed the revised estimate document provided to trustees, highlighting key changes.

Trustees had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. **OSTA/AECO – Education Action Conference**

Motion: 25-R39, J.Hunda/L.Debassige

That the Board approve the attendance of Student Trustee Nootchtai and Student Trustee Wilson-Zegil at the OSTA/AECO Education Action Conference in Ottawa on February 13-16, 2025.

Poll vote

Bob Clement: In-favour

Lisa Corbiere-Addison: In-favour

Linda Debassige: In-favour

Doreen Dewar: In-favour

David Farrow: In-favour

Anita Gibson: In-favour

Judy Hunda: In-favour

Judy Kosmerly: In-favour

Alex McCauley: In-favour

- Carried

3. **Notice of Absence** NIL

4. **Director's Remarks**

I know that Chair Farrow will speak to this but I would like to begin by wishing everyone involved in the school bus collision a speedy recovery. Our students and families are in our thoughts.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the board of Trustees for your support and advocacy for our students and staff. We remain focused on the priorities that you have established in Strategic Directions, which provides a purposeful path forward through your leadership.

Speaking of leadership...

Trustees:

This is Superintendent Lesley Fisher's last Board meeting as she retires on January 31st, 2025.

While we are happy that Lesley is beginning a new and exciting chapter in her life, we will miss her as a colleague and a friend.

Lesley has been a member of the Executive Council since September 2021.

As a Superintendent of Schools, she has provided exceptional leadership for the Espanola and Manitoulin Island family of schools.

She has also had a positive impact system-wide in many portfolios, including childcare, early years, parent engagement, health and safety, professional learning, and, most recently, in the important role of Math Lead for the Board.

She has worked with the Program team to prioritize professional learning in math, implement strategies, interventions and lighthouse classrooms, and develop scope and sequence charts, as well as diagnostics to improve student learning.

This is all part of the Board's Math Achievement Plan which has had a positive impact on our EQAO results.

A classroom teacher since 1993, Lesley Fisher taught a variety of grades in both the French Immersion and English programs prior to becoming a school administrator. She joined Rainbow District School Board in 2004 after five years as a Vice-Principal with the Algoma District School Board.

Lesley Fisher was Principal of Princess Anne Public School and Jessie Hamilton Public School before becoming the first Principal of the new Walden Public School in Lively. She also served as Principal of two French Immersion schools in New Sudbury, Carl A. Nesbitt Public School and Ernie Checkeris Public School.

Prior to becoming a Superintendent, Lesley Fisher shared her expertise as Principal of Program. She led the implementation of the Renewed Math Strategy and the revitalization of literacy assessment strategies resulting in improved outcomes for students.

In addition to leadership roles supporting curriculum implementation and teaching practices, Lesley Fisher has served as Chair of the Elementary Principals' Association and the Rainbow District Principals' Council.

She is a long-time instructor and coordinator for the Principals' Qualification Program, preparing educators to assume leadership roles.

She has also served on a variety of committees for the Board, including the Joint Health and Safety Committee, Leadership Steering Committee and French as a Second Language Steering Committee.

She has been a valued member of the Board's negotiating team.

In the spring of 2021, Lesley Fisher received the Difference Maker Award from the Ontario Principals' Council. The award recognizes administrators for their work supporting learning and teaching. Recipients are nominated by their peers, which certainly speaks volumes for the respect she has earned as an educator.

Lesley Fisher is a proud graduate of the Lasalle Secondary School French Immersion Program.

She has an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in History with a minor in French from Laurentian University.

She completed Bachelor of Education and Master's degrees at the Faculty of Education at Nipissing University, specializing in supervision and curriculum.

We are grateful for the legacy of excellence that Lesley Fisher leaves this board.

She has been an exemplary teacher, administrator, leader, role model and mentor. Not only will we miss her energy and expertise, we will miss her wonderful sense of humour. You always know when Lesley is near because you can often hear laughter.

We wish Superintendent Fisher the very best in her retirement. Thank you Lesley and congratulations on your outstanding career.

I would like to share some appointments with you:

Effective February 3, 2025, Arynn Frantz will be permanent as Principal of Westmount Public School.

Effective February 3, 2025, Elisa McNeil will be permanent as Principal of Lansdowne Public School.

Effective February 3, 2025, Laurie Ann Leikalns will be permanent as Principal of Barrydowne College.

Effective February 3, 2025 Dan Koziar will be appointed as Superintendent of Schools.

Effective February 3, 2025 Leslie Mantle will be appointed as Superintendent of Schools.

Effective February 3, 2025 Cori Pitre will join the Principal Student Achievement Team.

Effective February 3, 2025 Kate MacKenzie will join the Principal Student Achievement Team.

Effective February 3, 2025, Rachel Booker will be Acting Principal of Queen Elizabeth Public School.

Effective February 3, 2025, Lisa Puddester will be Acting Principal of Markstay Public School.

Effective February 3, 2025, Stephanie Theriault will be Acting Vice-Principal of Chelmsford Valley District Composite School.

Effective February 3, 2025, Jen Ferguson will be Acting Vice-Principal of Northeastern Elementary School.

In closing, I would like to wish all of our students writing exams success as a result of their hard work and preparation and thank all of our staff for their dedication.

5. **Other Items**

OPSBA Director – Trustee Kosmerly reminded fellow trustees of the upcoming PES conference taking place later this week with regional meetings scheduled on the 2nd day of the conference. The next OPSBA Board of Directors meeting will be on February 24, 2025 in Toronto and the Advocacy Day that was scheduled for February 25th has been cancelled.

Student Trustee – Student Trustee Wilson-Zegil shared that the Student Senate have booked Collège Boréal for the upcoming conference and are now working on the budget, conference t-shirts and senate presentation. She also thanked the board for approving their attendance at the upcoming OSTA conference.

Student Trustee Nootchtai shared that Turtle Concepts will be the keynote presentation for the upcoming conference on April 24th and invited all trustees to attend. Student Senate will also be publishing a “Meet the Senate” post that will be shared on social media. Student Trustee Nootchtai has also been invited to sit on the PPM128 Task Force panel as part of her role as Chair for the Indigenous Student Trustees Council and is looking forward to bringing the voice of indigenous students across Ontario.

6. **Trustees’ Remarks/Questions**

Trustee Corbiere-Addison attended the January 8th SEAC meeting and shared that the Preschool Transition meetings will be taking place soon to plan for Junior Kindergarten students with special education needs as they transition to school in September. As well the Board has switched from the Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) to the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) for students in Grades 4 and 7, which measures students learned reasoning abilities.

Trustee Kosmerly attended a Think Trades evening at Confederation Secondary School, which is to interest girls in trades. There was a dinner and speakers, and the group then got to

work in the Auto Shop, Wood Shop and see a 3D printer demonstration. She thanked Principal Bertrim and Jody Jakubo for a wonderful event.

Trustee Clement recently visited Espanola High School and sat in on a Visual Arts class where Confederation graduate Rob Cast was demonstrating his replica R2D2 and students were testing out mini Astromechs. He encouraged trustees to visit schools as there is always so much to see.

7. **Chairperson's Remarks**

I would like to begin my remarks this evening by acknowledging the school bus collision that occurred on Highway 69 South yesterday morning. Our thoughts are with the bus driver, the students who were on the bus, and their families. At times like this, we come together to support our students, families, and schools, and to support each other. For those who sustained injuries, we extend our wishes for a full recovery. We will continue to offer support through our administrators, mental health team, our teachers, our staff, and the entire school community.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank Superintendent Lesley Fisher for her years of service to the Rainbow District School Board. I first met Lesley when she was appointed Principal of Princess Anne Public School in 2004.

Your service to the students and staff of the Rainbow District School Board has been second to none.

I want to personally wish you a very happy retirement.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the many families who visited Rainbow elementary schools for our **Kindergarten Information Nights** last week. If you were unable to attend and have a child starting school, you can still register by contacting your area Rainbow school.

This past weekend, a group of elementary students from Chelmsford Valley District Composite School's first ever robotics team competed at the **FIRST LEGO League Provincial Championships** at Durham College. For their efforts, students were awarded the Rising All-Star Award. They earned their spot at the provincials by competing at the qualifying tournament in North Bay in December. Of the 21 teams at the qualifier, they were selected as one of six to advance to the championships and garnered an Engineering Excellence Award. Huge congratulations to students and coaches. The Rising All-Star Award celebrates a team that the judges notice and expect great things from in the future.

Secondary School Information Nights continue in the coming weeks...

Information Nights will take place on Wednesday, February 12th at **Manitoulin Secondary School** at 6:30 pm and Thursday, February 13th at **Espanola High School** at 6 pm. For those Information Nights that have already taken place, there is still time to register.

The next **Parent Involvement Committee Meeting** will take place on Tuesday, January 28th at 7 pm at the Centre for Education. There will be a presentation on safe schools. Parents/guardians are welcome to attend.

The **Environmental Education Committee** has challenged Rainbow Schools to kick off the new year with a green gathering - which is a shared meal where there is just enough food for everyone with no food waste and minimal garbage. This challenge is part of the Environmental

Committee's ongoing efforts to encourage sustainable practices in schools and communities. Next month, all schools will be challenged to reduce their electricity consumption.

Parents/guardians of students with special needs in Rainbow District School Board are invited to provide **input for the 2025-2026 Special Education Plan**. The deadline to complete the survey is Friday, March 7th. The survey link is currently available on the board website.

A friendly reminder that **secondary exams** will take place from Friday, January 24th to Thursday, January 30th.

There will be no school for students on Friday, January 31st for our fifth **Professional Activity Day** of the 2024-2025 school year. Information about the PA Day is on the board website.

There will also be no school for students and staff on Monday, February 17th for **Family Day**.

And that concludes my remarks for this evening. Thank you.

G. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

1. **Reports from Officials and Staff**
Special Education Advisory Committee minutes November 6, 2024 (official)
2. **Tenders/Requests for Proposals**
3. **Non-Staff Communications**

H. FUTURE MEETINGS

Parent Involvement Committee January 28, 2025 7:00 pm
Student Senate Meeting February 3, 2025 5:30 pm
Strategic Planning Committee February 4, 2025 5:00 pm
Special Education Advisory Committee February 5, 2025 12:00 pm
Equity & Inclusion Committee February 13, 2025 3:30 pm
Board Meeting February 18, 2025 5:00 pm

I. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: 25-R40, B.Clement/D.Dewar
That we do now adjourn at 6:36 p.m. – **Carried**