

PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Peel District School Board, held in the Brampton Room, the H. J. A. Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga, Ontario on Monday, December 5, 2016 at 20:30 hours.

Members present:

Janet McDougald, Chair	Sue Lawton
Suzanne Nurse, Vice-Chair	Brad MacDonald
Carrie Andrews	Kathy McDonald
Stan Cameron	Harkirat Singh
Robert Crocker	Rick Williams
David Green	

Member absent: (apologies received)

Nokha Dakroub

Student Trustee:

Omar Baboolal, Student Trustee South

Administration:

Dawn Beckett-Morton, Director, Human Resources Support Services
Jeff deFreitas, Coordinating Superintendent
Jaspal Gill, Associate Director, Operational Support Services
Poleen Grewal, Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services
Scott Moreash, Associate Director, Instructional Support Services
Janice Mueller, Executive Assistant
Tony Pontes, Director of Education
Randy Wright, Controller, Planning and Accommodation Support Services

Nicole Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Item 7.1, Report of the Striking Committee, was circulated.

Resolution No. 17-04 moved by Rick Williams
seconded by Carrie Andrews

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

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

2. Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Report of the Striking Committee

The report of the Striking Committee was presented by Vice-Chair Nurse, and she noted that the following assignments had been made:

2016-2017 STANDING / LEGISLATED COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Audit Committee

Sue Lawton
Harkirat Singh
Rick Williams

**Instructional Programs /
Curriculum Committee**

Stan Cameron
Robert Crocker
Kathy McDonald
Suzanne Nurse
Harkirat Singh
Rick Williams

**Physical Planning and
Building Committee**

Carrie Andrews
Stan Cameron
Robert Crocker
Nokha Dakroub
David Green
Brad MacDonald

**Special Education Advisory
Committee**

David Green
Sue Lawton
Suzanne Nurse

Note: The Board Chair is an ex-officio member of the standing committees.

Resolution No. 17-05

moved by Stan Cameron
seconded by Brad MacDonald

Resolved, that the report of the Striking Committee, be approved.

..... carried

4. Adjournment for Standing Committees to Elect Chair

The membership of each of the committees retired from the room to elect its Chairs. As a result, the following were elected:

Audit Committee	Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee
Chair to be elected at first meeting	Kathy McDonald, Chair
Physical Planning and Building Committee	Special Education Advisory Committee
David Green, Chair	Chair to be elected at first meeting

5. Election of Chair of the Human Resources and Negotiations Advisory Committee

The Human Resources and Negotiations Advisory Committee is a committee of the whole Board. The Chair requested nominations for the position of Chair of this committee.

Trustee Lawton nominated Trustee Nurse.

There being no further nominations, and following a one minute pause in the proceedings, Chair McDougald confirmed that Trustee Nurse had been acclaimed as Chair of the Human Resources and Negotiations Advisory Committee.

6. Appointment of Trustees to the Mental Health Advisory Committee

Notice was given at the November 22, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Board that two trustees will be appointed to the Mental Health Advisory Committee at this meeting. It was noted that the committee will meet a minimum of four times annually, and that meetings are expected to be held in the evenings, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Cameron nominated Trustee Andrews
Trustee Nurse nominated Trustee Lawton
Trustee Lawton nominated Trustee McDonald

Trustee Lawton declined the nomination. There being no further nominations, and following a one minute pause in the proceedings, Chair McDougald confirmed that Trustees Andrews and McDonald are appointed to the Mental Health Advisory Committee.

7. Appointment of Trustees to Advisory and Ad Hoc Committees

Appointments of trustees to advisory and ad hoc committees are listed at APPENDIX I.

8. Question Period

Trustee MacDonald referred to the meeting held on November 28, 2016 to consult with community members on revisions to the Friday prayer section of the Religious Accommodation operating procedure (OP). He suggested that the changes be thoroughly vetted before the OP is revised, and be communicated very clearly to schools. Remarking that the consultation was positive, Director of Education, Tony Pontes, indicated that he will bring a report to the December 12, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Board which summarizes discussions so far, identifies the main elements of revisions being considered, and indicates that the revised OP will be brought for receipt at a Regular Meeting of the Board in January 2017. Chair McDougald commented that, while not unanimous, there was consensus during the consultation with community members. She spoke of the Board's responsibility and the need for the school principal to know the content of the sermons. A lengthy discussion ensued. In response to clarification that trustees do not approve operating procedures, Trustee Crocker asked a procedural question with regard to trustees proposing changes to elements of the revised OP brought for receipt. Chair McDougald outlined the options, including that trustees can comment on the OP, indicate their disagreement when the vote to receive the report is taken, or can put a motion on the floor to refer the OP back to administration. Director Pontes added that trustees' feedback on the report being brought to the December 12, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Board will be considered in finalizing the OP.

In response to Trustee Williams' question, Director Pontes confirmed that the prayers are in Arabic and the sermons are in English. Replying to Trustee McDonald's question asking for clarification on congregational prayer, Director Pontes advised that congregational Friday prayer is a requirement for Muslims and, in schools, students pray as a group, led by a student. He confirmed that students from other religious denominations may also pray in a group. Trustee Singh queried as to the changes being considered, and Director Pontes noted that clarification will be brought regarding students praying on days other than Friday and sermons written by students. In reply to further questions from the trustee, Director Pontes listed occasions when students are required to share the content of their speeches, and he indicated that the intent is to ensure that the content does not violate the Human Rights Code or the school's code of conduct. Chair McDougald noted that the sermon should be provided to the principal or designate 24 hours prior to the time of the Friday prayer, unless the principal is satisfied with a shorter timeline. She added that the OP also provides clarification that students have two options, to pray in school in accordance with the OP, or to visit their faith centre. Suggesting that the proposed revisions be vetted through consultation, including with all trustees, Trustee Cameron asked whether students from other religions, if they can congregate to pray with one student leading the prayer, would be required to send their sermons to the principal. Director Pontes clarified that the option of student-led prayer is not provided to students of other religions. Trustee Green remarked that the needs of students across the Board should be considered, as this is a public school board. Stating that trustees are required to make responsible decisions, he commented on the difficulty of satisfying everyone when deciding contentious issues. Student Trustee Baboolal indicated that he has been in contact with the Muslim Students Association. Trustee Lawton asked him to share with her the opinions of the Glenforest Secondary School Muslim students on this topic.

8. Question Period (Continued)

Student Trustee Baboolal referred to the appointment of one trustee and one alternate to the Peel Student Presidents' Council, and he confirmed that he will provide the appointed trustees with the dates of meetings, when scheduled.

Trustee Lawton reported that former Student Trustee, Trevor Sookraj, was honoured as a peace builder by the YMCA, as part of the organization's Peace Medallion ceremony in Oshawa celebrating Peace Week across Canada.

9. Adjournment

Resolution No. 17-06 moved by Stan Cameron
seconded by David Green

Resolved, that the meeting adjourn (21:40 hours).

..... carried