

September 13, 2017
Programs & Human Resources Committee

1. OPENING

The Programs & Human Resources Committee meeting of the Newfoundland & Labrador English School Board was held on Wednesday, September 13, 2017 via teleconference. The meeting was called to order at 12:15 by the Chair, Corey Parsons.

Members present: Corey Parsons, Committee Chair
Hilary Primmer
Lester Simmons
Hayward Blake
Keith Culleton
Kevin Ryan
John George

Regrets: Scott Burden

Also in attendance: Tony Stack, Director of Education (Interim)
Lloyd Collins, Assistant Director of Education, Human Resources
Lucy Warren, Associate Director of Education (Programs) (Interim)
Elaine Cross, Administrative Assistant, Human Resources

The Chair, Corey Parsons, welcomed the trustees and staff and thanked everyone for making the time to attend the meeting.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: Moved by Hayward Blake, seconded by John George, and carried unanimously that the agenda be adopted as presented, with the addition of Item 5.6 as a roundtable discussion.

3. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

MOTION: Moved by Lester Simmons, seconded by John George, and carried unanimously that the minutes of the July 26, 2017 Programs and Human Resources Committee meeting be adopted as presented.

4. BUSINESS ARISING

No new business arising.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. Programs: Political Activity in Schools Policy (Discussion)

As follow up to a previous committee meeting, Lucy has been working to develop a policy regarding political activity in schools. She presented a draft document to the committee and has requested their input into its development. A briefing note is attached which provides links to additional information on the topic.

Lucy will be sharing the document with the committee via Google and has requested that everyone review the information and make suggestions for information they would like to see in the policy.

It was agreed that everyone would have this completed by October 15, 2017.

5.2. Human Resources: Policy HR-811 Prevention of Workplace Violence

This policy was originally presented to the committee last spring. Since then, feedback has been received from principals, focus groups of teachers, district staff, and the NLTA. Lloyd is asking that this resulting document, which has been included in the meeting package, be recommended to the Board for approval.

Trustee Culleton suggested two changes to the Definitions section of the document:

Abuse

Under the first bullet regarding Verbal Abuse, that the word “*excessive*” be removed and replaced with “*any*”. It would then read, “Verbal abuse is *any* use of language...”

Violence

That the phrase “*other than an employee*” be removed so that it reads, “Violence is the attempted or actual exercise by a person of physical force that causes...”

Tony pointed out that we would have to check with legal before changing the definition of Abuse. Lloyd agreed and committed to obtaining an opinion from legal counsel. Barring any legal implications, it was agreed that the changes would be made.

MOTION: Moved by John George, seconded by Keith Culleton, and carried unanimously that the Programs and Human Resources Committee recommend to the Board approval of the Prevention of Workplace Violence Policy, with the changes as discussed regarding definitions of Abuse and Violence, as tabled at the September 13, 2017 meeting of the Programs and Human Resources Committee of the Board.



5.3. Human Resources: Staffing Report

Lloyd indicated that all schools opened on time and fully staffed for the 2017-18 school year. Human Resources is currently filling maternity leaves that start in October or later. As a district, we processed in excess of 100,000 applications and filled over 1200 positions. The new hiring process implemented this year was very successful and positive feedback was received.

5.4. Human Resources: Approval of Retired Substitutes

Lloyd reviewed with the committee the process of obtaining approval for retired teachers as substitutes. This is sometimes a necessity in some rural areas where there may not be sufficient substitutes available. As retired teachers require special permission to work while collecting their pension, it often takes several weeks for the approval to be granted from the Dept. of Finance. In order to alleviate the delay in having substitutes available, Lloyd and Tony met with the Deputy Minister in August and requested that substitutes already approved last year be temporarily extended until October 15, 2017. That request was approved and those substitutes should be available to work later this week.

5.5. Human Resources: Teacher Allocation Appeal Process

Lloyd reviewed with the committee the Teacher Allocation Appeal Process, which has been included in the meeting package. Trustees sometimes get calls regarding this issue and he felt it important that they be aware of the process. It was already sent out to Principals and Senior Education Officers at school opening.

Trustee Parsons indicated that it is good to have this information and suggested that it be sent out to all trustees and not just members of this committee. Lloyd indicated that this would be done.

Lloyd also mentioned that there were 33 circumstances where a reserve was put in place and, as of today, 10 of these have been released. All student enrolment numbers have been verified by PowerSchool.

5.6. Round Table Discussion

Several trustees congratulated the District on the work completed to have all schools opened and staffed on time.

Trustee Blake raised the issue of class caps and does not agree with the use of combined grades. He would like to see this topic discussed further at the next working session of the board. Tony suggested that he take his request to the chair of the board. It was also pointed out that there is some confusion regarding multi grading and combined grades. Lloyd and Lucy will provide further documentation for everyone.

Trustee Culleton raised the issue of safety on school property and around bussing. He will review our current policies on this subject and raise the issue at a future meeting if necessary.

Trustee Ryan raised the issue of CDLI for Grade 9.



6. The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 1:30. Motion to adjourn by John George.

