

THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS – Thursday, May 11, 2017

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

As there were four voting representatives in attendance and six are required to form a quorum, the parent representatives agreed to proceed with an informal meeting.

2. GREEN ACTION CENTRE

Committee members were informed that on April 3, 2017, administration met with Green Action Centre to discuss whether they could assist schools with implementing a Walking School Bus or other options to transportation. The Administration invited Green Action Centre to attend District Advisory Committee Meeting's to provide an overview on alternatives to transportation.

Committee members received a presentation by Green Action Centre – Active and Safe Routes to Schools. Active and Safe Routes to School is a comprehensive community-based initiative that taps into the increasingly urgent demand for safe, walkable neighbourhoods. Active and Safe Routes to School promotes the use of active and efficient transportation for the daily trip to school, addressing health and traffic safety issues while taking action on air pollution and climate change.

Committee members were informed that over the past 30 years, the habit of walking to school has seen a steep decline. Studies have shown that almost 80% of children used to walk to school, compared to 35% today.

Active and Safe Routes to Schools can assist schools with helping to implement programs such as Walking/Cycling School Buses, Walking Wednesday Club, Neighbourhood Walkability Surveys, Pick-ups and Drop-off Zones, No-Idling Zones, Mapping activities, Clean Air Day, International Walk to School Month, School Travel Planning.

Committee members were informed that the School Travel Planning Program addresses the issue of sustainability, safety and health associated with the “school run” using a collaborative community based approach. School Travel Planning works closely with School administration and staff, Parents, Public Health Professionals, Children, Municipal officials and Police. A few benefits include reduced traffic congestion at schools, safe, active alternative to driving, increased physical activity and links to improved learning.

For more information on the program or to have a presentation please contact Green Action Centre, Active and Safe Routes to School by email at asrts@greenactioncentre.ca or by phone at 204-925-3773.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A parent representative from École Garden Grove enquired whether there were French language programs offered for new immigrant families. Committee members were informed that currently we do not have a French Language program being offered but consideration would be made if enough people were interested. Committee members suggested that an option for families to have experience with French could be a bridge supporting student and families learning.

4. FOR INFORMATION

4.1 Transportation of Pupils

Committee members were informed that the Board of Trustees passed a budget for the 2017/2018 school year which includes expenditures in the amount of \$406,594,200 for the fiscal period July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. To achieve a balanced budget, the Board considered many cost savings measures, including aligning the Division's transportation policy to be consistent with the Public Schools Act and services offered by other school divisions in the City of Winnipeg.

Committee members were informed that effective September 2017, only those students who meet the distance requirements of 1.6 kilometers boundary from the school to both the residence/daycare will be eligible to receive transportation. Students who have exceptional learning needs such as social/emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, cognitive/intellectual, communication, academic or special health-care will continue to be provided with appropriate school bus transportation. As well, students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 in a language or alternative program, and Nursery students attending one of WSD's three French immersion milieu schools or Aboriginal education school, whose residence/daycare is both 1.6 kilometers or further from the school will also continue to be provided with bus transportation.

Committee members were informed that students who do not meet the criteria noted above will no longer have an option to pay a fee for this service. Although, the Division recognizes that this will require some families to make adjustments to their daily schedules for the beginning of the 2017/2018 school year, it is important to implement these measures to ensure that all financial resources are redirected towards the classroom and programs that will enable students to be successful in their educational learning.

Committee members expressed concern regarding the revisions to the Division Transportation Policy for the 2017/2018 school year. Committee members stated that one household where all children were taking the bus will now be in a situation where only one child will be bused due to the policy revisions. This may cause families undue stress to find the siblings transportation to their school.

Committee members were informed that students who live in the catchment area and meet the distance requirements will continue to be bused. The administration will continue to monitor the transportation services and the Division's Policy revisions as the costs were increasing every year due to the additional routes required to transport students who would normally not be required.

Committee members were informed that provisions for transportation services were made last year to assist École LaVérendrye/Sir William Osler catchment area until the completion of the gymnasium at École LaVérendrye school.

4.2 Policy IGABA – Aboriginal Education

Committee members were informed that the Advisory Council on Indigenous Education (ACIE), a sub-committee of the Policy/Program Committee, has undertaken a review of Policy IGABA – Aboriginal Education and is inviting parents to participate in an interactive feedback process to ensure that the policy reflects the learning needs of students and schools.

Committee members were informed that a Community Gathering will be held on Thursday, May 25th, 2017 at R. B. Russell, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Principals will be seeking 3-5 representatives from each school to attend the Gathering to participate and review the policy. At the same time, the invited parents may also wish to view the WSD Indigenous Gallery Walk displays of the work being created in our schools. Committee members were informed to contact their respective Principal should they be interested in participating in the event.

4.3 School Names

Committee members were informed that the Public Relations Committee discussed the naming of schools in the Division and will continue its review of school names in the fall. Committee members were encouraged to share this information with their respective school and advise the Board if consideration should be given to the renaming of their school.

Committee members were provided with the biographies of school names and the guidelines for Naming/Renaming of Schools and Special Purpose Area.

4.4 District Advisory Reports and Summaries of Discussions

Committee members were informed that at a meeting held March 6, 2017, the Board of Trustees received the French Immersion Advisory Committee Summary of Discussions as information. Committee members were informed that once received by the Board, District Advisory Committee Reports and Summaries of Discussions are posted on the Division's website under the Family and Community tab.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Representatives:

Lucy Payette, École Laura Secord School
Stacy Huard, École LaVérendrye
Paula Leslie, École Riverview School
Scott Colburn, École Garden Grove School

Administration:

Julie Smerchanski, Director of Instruction and Assessment
Dominique Ostermann, Vice-Principal, École Robert H. Smith
Nelia Husack, Principal, École Victoria-Albert School
Lorraine Spence, Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Trustee Broughton
Collège Churchill
École George V School
École Secondaire Kelvin High School
École Lansdowne
École Sacré-Cœur

Non-Voting/Resource Members:

Green Action Centre, Active and Safe Routes to School Representative

Trustee:

Mark Wasyliv