

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23 – BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: General Affairs DATE: June 4, 2008

CHAIRPERSON: M. Baxter STAFF CONTACT: M. Roberts, Superintendent

In attendance:

Trustee M. Baxter (Chairperson)
Trustee R. Cacchioni
Trustee W. Horning
Trustee A. Hunt-Binkley
Trustee S. Nicholl
Trustee G. Scanlan
Trustee C. Wiebe
Staff:
M. Roberts, Superintendent of Schools
Larry Paul, Secretary-Treasurer
M. Stolze, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

Partner Group Representation:

COPAC - Deb Butler
COTA - Tom Potts
CUPE - Bill Zeman
COPVPA - Not available
DSC - Not available

Item 1. Action: Recommendations/Report from Advisory Council for Exceptional Students (ACES)

The recommendations pertained to these three areas:

1. The District Achievement Contract
2. Communication
3. Individual Education Plans

The Committee reviewed each recommendation, and the potential implications to the parents and District. The Superintendent responded to questions from the Committee and ACES representatives.

Following discussion on each recommendation individually, the Committee decided as follows:

Outcome: THAT: The ACES recommendations/report be given to the Superintendent for consideration and follow up, and a report back to the Board.

District Achievement Contract/Data Collection

1. Special Education data would be included in next year's Achievement Contract where available and appropriate.
2. During the 2008/2009 review of our Student Services Department, there would be evaluation of the mechanism used to track the number of exceptional students leaving the system prior to graduation.
3. The 2008/2009 independent review of Student Support Services shall proceed in the Fall as per the District Strategic Plan.

Communication

4. The Department will complete, as planned during 2008/2009, a new handbook for parents. "Frequently Asked Questions" could be included.
5. The Department will complete rewriting of current parent information pamphlets on a variety of Special Education topics (including an overview of the IEP process), and distribute through the District (including website).
6. ACES will be able to provide input to staff on expanding the Student Support Services sub-section of the District website to include specific information for parents. The availability of Student Services staff time and technical staff time was recognized as an issue.
7. ACES will consider either participating as part of the Harmony Day Planning Committee, or undertaking the organization of an Exceptional Student Awareness Day. The Superintendent will be informed of the decision and facilitate inclusion.
8. ACES will provide the Superintendent with the questions that remain unanswered regarding the last survey to parents of exceptional students. The Superintendent will respond.
9. ACES would like a second survey to be sent out next year with more definition to the questions. The Superintendent will direct the Department to undertake a second survey, and will ensure that ACES again has input to the questions.

Individual Education Plan

10. Frequently asked general questions on IEPs will be included in the Student Support Services new handbook for parents, and as a pamphlet item.
11. To increase knowledge and to assist in ensuring consistency across the District, an overview of basic information on IEPs will be developed for the District as a handout for resource teachers to give to parents.
12. ACES is willing to advise staff on the information that parents need in information pamphlets.
13. ACES Meeting Support and Operational Support
14. There is a need for consistent attendance by the Director of Student Support Services at all ACES general meetings.
15. The Superintendent would like to be included on the September 2008 meeting agenda, along with the Director of Student Support Services.
16. The Director of Student Support Services will continue to be the senior staff contact for ACES.

The ACES representatives were thanked for the considerable amount of work that they had accomplished, and commended for preparing the report and recommendations.

Item 2. Action: Guidelines - Acceptance/Distribution of Large Donations by Individual Schools

Following a query from Trustee Hunt-Binkley about equity, the Secretary-Treasurer asked the Committee to consider the need for developing District Guidelines regarding the acceptance and distribution of large donations by individual schools. He stated that large donations to Schools are few and far between. The Secretary-Treasurer responded to questions.

The COTA representative informed the Committee about specific policy in three BC School Districts. Given this information, and because our District currently has three germane policies (*Fund-raising, Charitable Donations, and Community Service and Fundraising by Schools*), Trustee Hunt-Binkley suggested that the item be deferred to allow her time for further review on the matter.

Outcome: THAT: The Committee defer to the November General Affairs Committee meeting any further discussion on the need for “Guidelines – Acceptance/Distribution of Large Donations by Individual Schools”.

The Secretary-Treasurer will prepare information and a recommendation on the need for policy or Board approval of donations in order to deal with equity issues.

Item 3. Action: Contradicting Policies – 405 and 475

Policy 475 – *Transportation: Authority and Responsibility* includes a statement which is contradictory to Policy 405 – *Student Placement*.

The Superintendent confirmed that other items in Policy 475 also need updating.

Outcome: THAT: The General Affairs Committee request the Coordinating Committee to refer Policy 475 - *Transportation: Authority and Responsibility* to the Planning and Facilities Committee for the purposes of review and amendment.

To facilitate Board approval of policy amendment recommendations at its June 25th public meeting, it was agreed that the Planning and Facilities Committee could deal with the matter on June 18th.

Item 4 Action: City of Kelowna Correspondence – Official Community Plan Review

The District is invited by the City of Kelowna to *participate in the early stages of the review process by sharing your ideas and issues with us so that they can be taken in consideration as Kelowna discusses how to ‘green our future’*. The Secretary-Treasurer advised the Committee that District staff are already providing input at meetings with City staff. Additionally, he is in the process of preparing a comprehensive written response to the City of Kelowna. This letter will stress the importance of having School District No. 23 involved in City long-term and short-term planning.

The Committee received the information. No other action was taken. Trustees who wish to provide input to the letter should contact the Secretary-Treasurer as soon as possible. The draft letter will be presented to the Board for its consideration at the public Board meeting on June 25, 2008.

Item 5. Information: Grade Configuration Review Update

The District will be facing a number of capital plan issues and challenges relative to growth, for example in the Okanagan Mission area. The Superintendent informed the Committee that the Board, through the District Strategic Plan, has authorized a review of our current grade configurations. Parents and partner groups will soon be surveyed for their opinions. The Superintendent reassured the partner groups that the implementation of a grade configuration survey does not necessarily mean that there will be any changes; it is simply a means of collecting opinion. If there are any questions or concerns, he will be pleased to respond. The survey report will be provided as information to the Board.

Future General Affairs Committee Meeting Topics:

- Need for Guidelines - *Acceptance/Distribution of Large Donations by Individual Schools*(Equity Issue)

Next scheduled Committee Meeting: Wednesday, November 5, 2008, 4:30 PM, School Board Office

Questions: Please Contact:

Moyra Baxter, Chairperson

**Phone: 250 767-6153 e-mail: mbaxter@sd23.bc.ca
or**

Mike Roberts, Superintendent

Phone: 250 470-4356 e-mail: mroberts@sd23.bc.ca

Moyra Baxter, Committee Chairperson