

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23 – BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Finance and Legal Committee DATE: November 21, 2007

CHAIRPERSON: Trustee A. Hunt-Binkley STAFF CONTACT: L. Paul, Secretary-Treasurer
E. Sadlowski, Director of Finance

Attendees:

Trustee A. Hunt-Binkley (Chairperson)	Staff:
Trustee R. Cacchioni (Committee Member)	E. Sadlowski, Director of Finance
Trustee W. Horning (Acting Committee Member)	D. Carmichael, Finance Manager
Trustee C. Wiebe (Absent)	M. Essler, Executive Assistant (Recorder)
Trustee M. Baxter	

Partner Group Representation:

COPAC	Deb Butler, President
COTA	No representative
COPVPA	No representative
CUPE	Leanne Louie, Secretary-Treasurer (arrived at 1:40)
DSC	No representative

Public Question/Comment Period

1. Jacqui Sproule, President of ACES Committee

Jacqui Sproule, on behalf of the ACES Committee, requested that Eileen Sadlowski, Director of Finance, make a separate budget presentation to the ACES Committee. The Director Finance concurred that a presentation could be arranged for the ACES Committee a couple of weeks after the January 14, 2008 budget presentation at the COPAC Meeting.

Discussion/Action Items

1. Draft Budget Consultation Brochure

Eileen Sadlowski, Director of Finance, provided a draft of the “What Choices Would You Make” brochure. The final brochure will be sent out with the Superintendent’s letter the first week of December to all schools and posted on the website. The Committee discussed amendments to the brochure including definition of the class size/class composition and explanation of Student Centered Leadership, the Mission Statement and Vision Statement be inserted on first page of brochure, and inclusion and explanation of percentage of budget which the Board actually has discretion over. On page 4 of the brochure move Q.2 to Q.1 a) and Q.1 b) to Q.2. There would also be the addition of a tick box for identifying whether the individual completing the form is a parent, staff member, student or community member. There will also be included information that the form can be returned by mail, fax, email or that it can be returned to the school for delivery in the school mail to the Board Office.

Outcome:

The Director of Finance will make the amendments to the “What Choices Would You Make” brochure and send out the final brochure to the Committee Members for final review.

2. Review of Policy 160 – Finance and Legal Committee

The Director of Finance advised that the review of Policy 160 – Finance and Legal Committee was requested. The Director of Finance recommended a review of item 1 - Membership. Trustee Hunt-Binkley also indicated the inclusion of a paragraph that the Finance and Legal Committee meet with the external auditors separately from senior staff.

The Committee discussed the amendments to 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. The following amendments are to be forwarded to the Board for consideration:

1.2.1 ~~the Board Chairperson~~ and a representative from each partner groups for purposes of providing input;

1.2.2 ~~Secretary/Treasurer~~/Director of Finance

The Committee continued to discuss amendments to Policy 160 – Finance and Legal Committee, including the addition of item 4.7 as follows:

4.7 meet with the external auditors at an Incamera Meeting without staff members present.

Outcome:

That the amendments as discussed to Policy 160 – Finance and Legal Committee, at the November 21, 2007 Public Finance and Legal Committee Meeting, be forwarded to the Board for approval.

Information Items

1. Update on Status of Ministry Funding

The Director of Finance reviewed the letter dated October 18, 2007 from the Ministry of Education with regard to 2007/08 Operating Grants. The letter states that the Ministry of Education will be conducting a change to the student-based funding formula. In previous years, students in grades 10, 11 and 12 who were enrolled in four courses (half-time) would be funded as full-time students. The new student-based funding formula would be based on a course by course basis. All School Districts are required to resubmit their 1701 forms by December 3, 2007. The Ministry of Education will then conduct a review of the resubmitted data and report back to School Districts on their funding. The Committee discussed the contents of the resubmitted 1701 forms.

Outcome:

That the Finance and Legal Committee forward a recommendation to the Board that, pending receipt of updated information from the Superintendent, the Board write a letter to the Minister of Education expressing their concern over the change in the funding formula.

2. 2007/2008 – 2008/2009 Budget Timeline

The 2007/2008 – 2008/2009 Budget Timeline, as attached to the November 21, 2007 Finance and Legal Committee Meeting, is the final document and has been reviewed by the Board.

3. Budget Principles 2008/2009

The Committee discussed further amendments to the Budget Principles 2008/2009, including the inclusion of the definition of the Achievement Contract and School Planning Reports.

Outcome:

That the Budget Principles 2008/2009, as presented and amended at the February 21, 2007 Finance and Legal Committee Meeting, be forwarded to the Board as an information item.

4. Copy of letter from School District No. 38 (Richmond) directed to The Honourable Shirley Bond regarding Funding Surpluses

The Director of Finance reviewed the letter directed to The Honourable Shirley Bond from School District No. 38 (Richmond). The Director of Finance indicated there is misrepresentation on the Funding Surplus 2006/2007 form, as attached to the letter received from School District No. 38 (Richmond), in that the percentage does not break out that part of the surplus that has already been appropriated. The Funding Surplus 2006/2007 document indicates School District No. 23 with a surplus of \$7,293,953 whereas approximately \$5,500,000.00 is committed to the next school year, leaving approximately \$1,800,000.00 unappropriated surplus. The Committee reviewed the Notes to the Audited Financial Statements for School District No. 23.

Outcome:

The Finance and Legal Committee forward a recommendation to the Board that the Board write a letter of clarification to the Minister of Education regarding the Ministry's interpretation of School District surpluses.

5. Items Requiring Special Mention

The Director of Finance advised the Committee that Gord McLean, of Dominion Securities, with whom the School District has had a long-standing relationship with, recently passed away. Dominion Securities has appointed a new School District contact.

Outcome:

That the new School District No. 23 contact with Dominion Securities be invited to a future Finance and Legal Committee for introduction.

6. Recommendations/Referrals to the Board/Coordinating Committee/Other Committees

Referrals to the Board:

Amendments to Policy 160 - Finance and Legal Committee – *December 2007*

Letter to the Minister of Education expressing Finance and Legal Committee's concern over the change in the funding formula – *November 2007*

Budget Principles 2008/2009 – *December 2007*

Letter of clarification to the Minister of Education regarding the Ministry's interpretation of School District surpluses – *November 2007*

7. Items for Future Finance and Legal Committee Meetings

Director of Technology and Education Services – Contractual Status with Ministry of Education regarding BCeSIS – *Future*

Introduction of new School District No. 23 contract at Dominion Securities - *Future*

8. Meeting Schedule

Monday, January 14, 2008 – 7:00 p.m. at Hollywood Road Education Centre

Questions – Please Contact:

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Anna Hunt-Binkley, Chairperson