

HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Policy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, November 8, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Room, 802 Drury Lane,
Burlington, ON

Members Present: A. A. LeMay (Chair) A. Iantomasi
 A. Danko J. Michael
 P. Marai M. Rowe
 J. Morrison E. Viana

Excused: D. Rabenda
 E. Bradley
 E. Harper
 C. Schneider

Staff Present: M. W. Pautler, Director of Education (Resource)
 M. Tessari, Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: A. Swinden

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Opening Prayer

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with a prayer led by A. A. LeMay.

2. APPROVALS

2.1 The agenda was reviewed.

The following motion was presented:

<i>Moved by: M. Rowe</i> <i>Seconded by: A. Iantomasi</i>
<i>RECOMMENDED, that the agenda be approved as amended.</i> CARRIED

2.2 The minutes of the October 11, 2011 meeting were reviewed.

The following motion was presented:

<i>Moved by: E. Viana</i> <i>Seconded by: J. Michael</i>
<i>RECOMMENDED, that the minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting held on October 11, 2011 be approved as presented.</i> CARRIED

3. ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Policy II-47 Fees for Learning Materials, Programs, & Curricular/Co-Curricular Activities

The Policy Committee reviewed Policy II-47 Fees for Learning Materials, Programs, and Curricular & Co-Curricular Activities. M. Pautler noted that no amendments or modifications had been made to the policy since it has been approved at second reading by the Board of Trustees.

M. Tessari provided clarification on a question raised at the October 11th Policy Committee Meeting regarding Civics Days. She indicated that information she received from the Secondary Principals is that many schools do not charge a fee for Civics Days, except on days that are designated as fundraisers. She added that participation is always optional for students, and noted that principals report a student participation rate of approximately 95%.

M. Pautler provided an update in response to the concern raised by D. Rabenda at the October 11th Policy Committee Meeting regarding agenda books. He noted that agenda books are explicitly identified as one of the things for which schools could legitimately levy a charge. He indicated that agenda books are used extensively in our schools, and with an average cost between \$7.50 and \$8.00 per agenda, it costs the Board approximately \$250,000 per year to absorb the expenditure. He noted that while staff would not recommend levying a fee for agenda books at this time, it would certainly be something that could be considered if individual schools see a value in doing so.

The following recommendation was put forth:

Moved by: J. Morrison
Seconded by: P. Marai

RECOMMENDED, that the Policy Committee forward Board Policy II-47 Fees for Learning Materials, Programs, and Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities to the November 15, 2011 Regular Board Meeting for Third and Final reading.

CARRIED

3.2 Policy I-34 Employee/Trustee Expense Policy

M. Pautler addressed Policy I-34, Employee/Trustee Expenses. He noted that The Board's current Policy I-34, Employee/Trustee Expenses, outlines the processes for reimbursement of eligible expenses for staff, trustees, and student trustees. The Board does not have in place a policy that addresses the reimbursement of expenses for external members of the Board's three (3) statutory committees (i.e. Audit Committee; SEAC; CPIC).

He provided for the committee's consideration, some revisions to Policy I-34 in order to expand the scope of the policy so that it will apply not only to staff and trustees, but also to external members of the Board's statutory committees. He added that staff recommend a change in the name of the policy to Reimbursement of *Board Business Expenses*.

In response to a question related to cost, M. Pautler indicated that while the ministry provides funding for CPIC for travel, there is no explicit funding source for SEAC or the Audit Committee.

M. Pautler also noted that at some point later in the school year he anticipates bringing this policy back for further revision in order to more closely align it to provincial guidelines. He added that while he believes the current policy is defensible in terms of mileage reimbursement, staff will likely recommend a reduction to the current meal allowance.

The following recommendation was put forth:

Moved by: E. Viana
Seconded by: P. Marai

RECOMMENDED, that the Policy Committee forward Policy I-34 to the November 15, 2011 Regular Board Meeting for approval as amended.

CARRIED

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

4.1 School Uniforms

In response to Board Motion #172/11, a report on School Uniforms was provided to the members of the Policy Committee. J. Michael thanked the Director and staff for the report. She outlined the advantages of having a school uniform, and expressed her hope that school uniforms be mandated across all of the Board's elementary schools.

Discussion ensued on the process that would be involved in implementing mandatory school uniforms Board-wide.

In response to a request for clarification on the process, M. Pautler indicated that the current policy has delegated the authority of decision-making to parents and school communities. He noted that before the Board can consider the implementation of mandatory school uniforms, the first step would be to adopt a policy which would change the locus of decision making and return it to the Board of Trustees. He suggested that the Board may want to consider involving the broader community through a public consultation process to determine if, in fact, the decision to implement school uniforms at the elementary school level is one that should rest with the Board of Trustees. He also offered that he would seek a legal opinion on the matter.

The following motion was put forth:

*Moved by: A. Iantomasi
Seconded by: J. Michael*

RECOMMENDED, that the Policy Committee request that the Director obtain a legal opinion, and that the matter of School Uniforms be brought back for discussion once the five schools scheduled to conduct a vote this year have had a opportunity to poll their school communities. **CARRIED**

4.2 Board Support of Community Events

M. Pautler provided for the consideration of the Policy Committee, a proposed set of guidelines to assist the Board in applying a consistent approach to requests for trustee representation and Board sponsorship at various events, and to identify which expenses would be eligible for reimbursement. He noted that the intent is not to replace the Board's Policy I-34, but rather to provide a reference that will assist trustees in determining appropriate expenditures

The Committee discussed which category would best apply to the Golf Tournament. P. Marai suggested that for the sake of consistency, the Bishop's Dinner event, and the Trustee Golf Tournament should fall under the same category since at this time both events will benefit the Board's newly activated charitable foundation. The Director agreed with the observation, and indicated that this would be reflected in the guidelines.

4.3 Environmental Initiative

P. Marai addressed the environmental initiative to reduce the use of water bottles. He suggested that the Board should recognize the staff and schools who have chosen to implement the ban of bottled water at their school sites. He further recommended that a Board Policy should be developed to ban the use and sale of water bottles at all school and Board sites.

M. Tessari provided some background on the environmental initiative to reduce the use of water bottles in our schools. She noted that the initiative, which is co-sponsored by the OECTA Elementary Unit, was first proposed as an awareness campaign during the Fall, 2010. She noted that the proposal was consistent not only from an environmental perspective, but also from a social justice perspective. A half-day voluntary in-service was provided to teachers, faith animators, and social justice leads in schools. Each attendee was provided with a kit which included guidelines and information, as well as a copy of the *Blue Gold* DVD. M. Tessari noted that while the ban of water bottles is not mandated, many schools have chosen to implement the ban of water bottles during staff meetings.

In response to a suggestion by P. Marai that the sale of bottled water be banned across the Board, M. Pautler provided some background on the Board's contractual obligation with the vending machine provider. He suggested that if trustees have an interest in taking the initiative from the realm of good practice and implementing a policy, it would be prudent to wait until the Board's contract with the vending machine provider expires in 2013. M. Tessari added that she would contact other school boards that have implemented a policy to ban water bottles, to gather information.

A. A. LeMay indicated that a presentation will be brought to the Board at a future Board Meeting.

POST-NOTE: A presentation on the environmental initiative to reduce/ban the use of water bottles is scheduled to be provided to Trustees at the Regular Board Meeting held on January 17, 2012.

4.4 HCDSB Technology in the Classroom Review

P. Marai put forth, for the consideration of the Policy Committee, a suggestion to conduct a survey to solicit community feedback on the use of technology in the classroom.

M. Pautler indicated that when the Board approved in June, 2010, *Fulfilling the Promise: Strategic Directions 2010-2015*, it approved a series of specific strategic commitments, one of which is related to 21st Century Teaching and Learning. He noted that in response to this strategic commitment, a steering committee was initiated, led by Superintendent Rossini. As the committee has advanced their work, a series of pilot programs have been established to gather specific data around the impact of the use of tools (laptops, iPads, tablets, etc.) on student engagement and student learning. M. Pautler indicated that the data collected from these pilot programs will provide feedback from teachers and students regarding current and potential uses for technology in classroom programs.

In response to a question raised by P. Marai, M. Tessari indicated that the iPad programs are being piloted at Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School and St. Matthew Catholic Elementary School.

P. Marai explained that the survey he proposes would be intended to compliment the data collection already underway; it would be more qualitative than quantitative in nature.

M. Pautler indicated that he would follow up with S. Rossini to determine whether this type of survey would complement the data collection process already underway.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

5.1 Audit Committee

An update report on the Board's Audit Committee was provided to the Policy Committee as information. The next meeting is scheduled to take place at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 15, 2011.

5.2 Policy Committee Work Plan 2011-2012

The chart was provided as information. M. Pautler noted that as policies are added to the work plan, at some point in the near future, the work plan will have to come back to the Policy Committee for prioritization.

Motion to Move In Camera

The Policy Committee moved in camera at 9:08 p.m.

*Moved by: A. Iantomasi
Seconded by: E. Viana*

RECOMMENDED, that the Policy Committee move in camera.

CARRIED

The meeting returned to public session at 9:34p.m.

6. **MOTION TO EXCUSE ABSENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The following motion was put forth:

<p><i>Moved by: P. Marai</i> <i>Seconded by: A. Iantomasi</i></p> <p><i>RECOMMENDED, that D. Rabenda be excused.</i></p>	<p><i>CARRIED</i></p>
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MOTION TO ADJOURN

The meeting closed with a prayer led by P. Marai at 9:35 p.m.

<p><i>Moved by: J. Morrison</i> <i>Seconded by: E. Viana</i></p> <p><i>RECOMMENDED, that the meeting adjourn.</i></p>	<p><i>CARRIED</i></p>
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