

**Upper Grand District School Board  
Business Operations Committee  
Minutes**

April 12, 2022

The Business Operations Committee of Upper Grand District School Board met on Tuesday, April 12, 2022, virtually and in the Board Room at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, Ontario commencing at 7:00 p.m.

The Chairperson, Trustee MacNeil presided, and Trustees Bailey, Bedi, Busuttill, Edwards, Foley, Ross, and Topping were present with regrets from Trustees Campbell and Lustgarten Evoy. Student Trustee Emilie Hill was also in attendance.

Present from the Administration were, Director of Education Sovran, Executive Superintendent McDonald, Executive Superintendent of Business Operations and Support Services Regier, together with Superintendents Donaldson, Heaslip, Hamilton, McCutcheon, and Taha, Communications Officer Loney, Executive Officer of Human Resources Pyke, Manager of Planning Angrish, Manager of Elementary Recruitment Staff Crandall, and Manager of Secondary Recruitment Staff Scott.

Trustee MacNeil advised that the agenda had been updated to include a new item # 8: a report on absenteeism.

**Approval of Agenda**

Trustee Foley moved that the agenda be approved as amended.

**The motion carried.**

**Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**The motion carried.**

**Approval of Minutes**

Trustee Topping moved that the minutes of the Business Operations Committee meeting held March 8, 2022 be approved as printed.

**The motion carried.**

## **Trustee Climate Emergency Committee**

Trustee Edwards shared some highlights from the TCEC meeting held on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Thanks were expressed to Trustee Busuttil for the letter she sent regarding carbon neutral school funding. The Committee continued to discuss ways to make the boardroom more environmentally friendly such as reusable take-out containers, and dishwasher soap that would counteract the hard water. This would benefit the board's dishwasher and in turn, water glasses could be used again during meetings. In environmental news she shared the students went to the OSTA BCC Board Council conferences and participated in an environmental working group which were making a handbook to be distributed to the school boards with different environmental initiatives. Also, at the EEMC meeting, there was discussion on the importance of recycling in every school, and how currently recycling is voluntary and not mandatory. The monthly challenge to the trustees was to bring Boomerang lunches in for a week, which means you bring all your garbage back home, and hopefully from doing that you could find other ways to use less garbage. Several videos were shared on how to better green Upper Grand board rooms.

### **Recommendation # 1**

Trustee Edwards moved that the minutes of the Trustee Climate Emergency Committee (TCEC) held March 10, 2022 be received and considered.

**The motion carried.**

## **Preliminary Elementary Teacher Staffing for 2022-2023 School Year**

Manager of Elementary Recruitment Staff Crandall presented the preliminary elementary teacher staffing for the 2022-2023 school year. The projected enrolments for the 2022-2023 school year were used to determine staffing, and elementary staffing was set at 1411.7 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers.

### **Recommendation # 2**

Trustee Edwards moved by that:

1. The report Preliminary Elementary Teacher Staffing for 2022-2023 School Year dated April 12, 2022 be received.
2. Based on the projected Elementary FTE of 24,247 and system needs, a preliminary allocation of Elementary teaching staff for the 2022-2023 school year be set at 1411.7 FTE teachers.

**The motion carried.**

### **Preliminary Secondary School Teacher Staffing for 2022-2023 School Year**

Manager of Secondary Recruitment Staff Scott presented the preliminary secondary teacher staffing for the 2022-2023 school year. The 2022-2023 projected enrolments, including international students, were used to determine staffing. Secondary staffing was set at 747.83 FTE teachers.

#### **Recommendation # 3**

Trustee Foley moved that:

1. The report re Preliminary Secondary School Teacher Staffing for 2022-2023 School Year dated April 12, 2022 be received.
2. Based on system needs and the projected Secondary ADE of 10,889.5 (includes projected international students), a preliminary allocation of Secondary Teaching staff for the 2022-2023 school year be set at 747.83 FTE teachers.

**The motion carried.**

### **OPSBA Update**

Trustee MacNeil mentioned Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. is the deadline for the Policy Resolutions. If the resolutions are received after that date but before noon on Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, they would still be printed in the AGM Handbook. Resolutions received after noon on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022 would not be included in the handbook but could be presented to the membership from the floor.

Trustee MacNeil asked the Board if there was interest in submitting a policy resolution.

Trustee Bailey shared a resolution would not be voted on at a Board Meeting in time to submit one, and noted the best course of action would be for the TCEC to regroup and decide on whether to bring one through the floor at the AGM, or through the policy working group.

Trustee Busuttil informed the trustees she met with the Director last month to discuss a policy resolution coming to the annual meeting. Her intent is to prepare a policy resolution to bring forward from the floor at the annual meeting and she will send the draft to Trustee Bailey. Trustee Bailey requested that the draft also be shared with Trustees MacNeil, Bedi, and Edwards.

#### **Recommendation # 4**

Trustee Bailey moved that the verbal OPSBA update be received.

**The motion carried.**

#### **Absenteeism Report**

Director of Education Sovran informed that Public Health officials have noted we are in a 6<sup>th</sup> wave of COVID-19 and it is expected to last another several weeks. This has significantly impacted the absenteeism rate of staff directly involved in schools and students across the Upper Grand, and absenteeism has increased considerably after the March Break. Since in-person learning resumed in January, Upper Grand DSB has been monitoring staff absences on a daily basis and using many strategies to ensure that student safety and supervision is maintained. This has required an ongoing list of regular supply staff, emergency supply staff, and the redeployment of centrally assigned staff. Unfortunately, staff shortages may result in the collapsing of classes, and potentially closing schools temporarily. Whenever possible, these decisions would be made as early as possible to allow families time to make necessary arrangements. If a school or class must close temporarily, students would be supported online through asynchronous learning via their Google Classroom environment and/or UG2GO. These measures do remain as options if needed, in order to ensure the safety and the supervision of students in Upper Grand DSB.

Trustee Foley asked if Director Sovran could possibly meet with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health and receive some information from them and bring it back to the Board. He wondered what the Public Health would consider an actionable requirement in order to move forward and reintroduce masking. Director Sovran informed the Board he had a scheduled meeting with Dr. Tenenbaum from the WDGPH unit the following day to discuss these very matters and will bring back to the Board the information.

Trustee Foley raised a concern regarding calls he has received from parents who are requesting a need for more information to be posted and available for parents to make better informed decisions. He expressed a need to deliver a much clearer message to all. Director Sovran shared Upper Grand DSB will continue to work towards meeting the needs of all students and families. Upper Grand will continue to work with the Public Health Unit to actively provide additional, simplified communication in any way that continues to emphasize all of the Public Health measures that have been communicated such as frequent hand washing, distancing when possible, screening daily before coming to work/school, continued wearing of masks indoors, and staying home if you have symptoms or are feeling unwell. Director Sovran identified that through the board's communication, messaging, and everyone's cooperation through

implementing what has been strongly recommended by Public Health, that we can work together to manage through this 6th wave.

Trustee Busuttil also expressed the need to make the communication from Public Health and Upper Grand DSB to be clearer, and for parents to have easier access to this information. She suggested working with the Public Health Unit to help with materials that speak to the benefit of masking.

Director Sovran shared that Upper Grand DSB continues to offer both in Elementary and Secondary, the opportunity to switch to remote learning should any student/family feel that it is appropriate and will support and facilitate that through to the end of the school year.

Trustee Edwards inquired about busing and driver shortages. Executive Superintendent Regier reported that overall, the busing situation has improved since January, with some ongoing challenges that continues to be monitored. The overall driver availability has been better, no routes have been cancelled, and an earlier consolidation of routes has improved matters as well.

Trustee Foley asked if Upper Grand DSB has rapid antigen tests (RAT) available. Director Sovran confirmed there is an adequate supply of rapid antigen test kits and provided that this has been communicated through the website, social media, and schools that these tests are available for students through the school offices. He also emphasized that there are surgical, medical, and non-fit N95 masks available for all staff as well as the 3-ply masks for all students.

#### **Recommendation # 5**

Trustee Foley moved that the verbal Absenteeism report be received.

**The motion carried.**

#### **Other Business – nil report**

#### **Move to In Camera**

Trustee Bailey moved that this committee move In Camera.

**The motion carried.**

## **Adjournment**

Trustee Edwards moved that the Business Operations Committee adjourn and this meeting now close at 8:16 p.m.

**The motion carried.**

**This document is available in alternative formats upon request.**