

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES of the Special Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

PRESENT:

Members: In Person: F. Alexander,, E. Crowe, J. DiMeo, A. Grella, M. Iafrate, A. Saggese, J. Wigston
Virtual: M. Barbieri, C. Cotton

Administration: In Person: In Person: J. De Faveri, J. Sarna, R. Antunes, A. Battick, M. Brosens, J. Chiutsi, G. De Girolamo, K. Elgharbawy, A. Iafrate, T. Laliberte, C. McNeil, S. Morrow, L. Paonessa, J. Powers, L. Sawicky, S. Wright, K. Scanlon, C. Tupchong
Virtual: N/A

Approved Absence: Trustee T. McNicol

Recording Officer: S. Greco (In Person)

Presiding: E. Crowe, Chair of the Board

2025:099 CALL TO ORDER / OPENING PRAYER

Elizabeth Crowe, Chair of the Board, welcomed everyone to the Special Board Meeting and led the opening prayer at 9:01 pm followed by the Land Acknowledgement. Prayers were offered for two custodians, that recently passed away, for their families as well as the two school communities where they served with such diligence and passion.

2025:100 ROLL CALL – Approved Absence: Trustee T. McNicol

2025:101 APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL: NIL

2025:102 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Remove 16g MYFRP Proposal - HREA Budget

MOTION: DiMeo/Iafrate

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

– MOTION CARRIED –

2025:103 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR CURRENT MEETING: NIL

2025:104 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL

2025:105 a) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S): NIL

2025:106 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL

2025:107 CHAIR’S REPORT / UPDATE / INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES: NIL

2025:108 OCSTA / BOARD OF DIRECTOR’S UPDATE: NIL

2025:109 DIRECTOR’S REPORT / UPDATE: NIL

2025:110 STUDENT TRUSTEES’ REPORT: NIL

2025:111 RECOGNITIONS / OUTSIDE PRESENTATIONS: NIL

2025:112 DELEGATIONS: NIL

2025:113 JOURNEY TOWARDS OUR VISION: NIL

2025:114 ACTION ITEM(S) (including Committee Reports):

Chair Crowe stated that the Multi-Year Financial Recovery Plan (MYFRP) needs to be submitted to the Ministry by the end of January 2025. Any Motions passed that evening would be incorporated into the final MYFRP plan. A final version of the MYFRP plan will be included in the January 28, 2025 Regular Board Meeting for approval. Each Item will be voted on separately with a recorded vote. It was noted that there were no classified items from the Special Committee of the Whole meeting.

a) APPROVAL OF REPORT NO. 2025:05 SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Vice-Chair Maria Iafrate presented, for approval, Report No. 2025:5 of the Special Committee of the Whole private session held on January 21, 2025.

(i) DECLASSIFIED (Action Items for Approval):

MOTION: Iafrate/Alexander

THAT the Board authorize staff to maximize opportunities for the rental of vacant spaces.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY -**

MOTION: Iafrate/Saggese

THAT the supervision of students be reviewed within the parameters of maximizing supervision minutes of all employee groups and still ensuring student safety.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY -**

MOTION: Iafrate/Cotton

THAT the Board approve the MYFRP Proposal for the Board Administration and Governance Envelope to achieve annual savings of \$1M by 2026-27.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY -**

MOTION: Iafrate/DiMeo

THAT reductions to central OECTA Positions (non-Student Services) be made equivalent to \$700K.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY -**

MOTION: Iafrate/Saggese

THAT staffing for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program be adjusted to ensure a sustainable and equitable level of support for students, resulting in a savings of \$325K.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY -**

MOTION: Iafrate/Wigston

THAT the second phase of changing the model to best serve the needs of our ASD students in their home elementary schools be implemented effective September 2025 for a savings of \$600K.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY -**

MOTION: Iafrate/Alexander

THAT the Intensive Literacy Intervention Teacher (ILIT) program be discontinued and Lexia Core5 Licenses be purchased as a Tier 3 support for students in grades 4-5 for a net budgetary reduction of \$1.89M.

Trustee Grella stated she would like to see the continuation of the ILIT program for one additional year.

- **MOTION CARRIED-**

In Favour: Alexander, Barbieri, Crowe, DiMeo, Iafrate, Saggese

Opposed: Cotton, Grella, Wigston

MOTION: lafrate/DiMeo

THAT the Board approve that the MYFRP includes projected cost savings for Special Education of \$2.1M in 2026-27 and an additional \$1.3M in 2027-28.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY-**

Chair Crowe clarified that the actual details of staff's proposals will come to the Board for approval during the budget process for 2026-27 and 2027-28..

MOTION: lafrate/DiMeo

THAT the coverage for short term Principal/Vice Principal absences be reviewed to provide opportunities for professional development and growth while at the same time generating savings of \$35K.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY-**

b) MYFRP PROPOSAL - STREAM CENTRES

A Arcadi, Superintendent of Curriculum & Assessment provided a summary of the MYFRP Proposal to reduce the number of STREAM Centres from 6 to 4. There was also a proposal to charge \$5 per student for busing to offset some the transportation cost.

Chair Crowe stated that there was a request to vote on the two recommendations separately.

Vice-Chair lafrate expressed her concerns with reducing this popular program as the feedback has been incredible and positive by both students and parents. Students are fully engaged and she would be opposed to reducing staff in this area. The program is the envy of all Boards and the program is thriving. Vice-Chair lafrate further stated that our exceptional learners have learned so much in the STREAM Centres.

Chair Crowe stated that in the past the Board operated six centres with four teachers, and Superintendent Arcadi confirmed that this was a possibility but the centres would serve less students. The mover and seconder agreed to amend the Motion willing to keep six centres open staffed by four teachers. Trustee Wigston agreed that the STREAM centres provide an excellent hands on learning experience for students, but hard decisions had to be made and that she would be in favour of reducing the service. Trustee Cotton stated that the Board is declining in enrolment and we may find ourselves serving quite efficiently and this may be a decision that is needed at this time.

MOTION: Wigston/Alexander

THAT the Board approve the MYFRP Proposal to staff six STREAM centres with four teachers to generate a cost savings of \$310K.

- **MOTION CARRIED -**

In Favour: Alexander, Cotton, Crowe, DiMeo, Grella, Wigston

Opposed: Barbieri, lafrate, Saggese

Chair Crowe stated she was against the Motion to charge \$5 per student from the perspective of accessibility and equity. Since the number of STREAM centres have now been reduced, she had concerns that we would not get 100% of schools participating due to the financial barrier.

Trustee Wigston stated that \$5 per student is half of what it costs to have Scientist-in-the-School and this provides students a full day, out of classroom experience, and that she would be in support of this Motion. Vice-Chair lafrate also supported the Motion and stated that if students are not able to pay, then the principals can cover the transportation cost.

MOTION: lafrate/Cotton

THAT the Board approve the MYFRP Proposal to recover \$5/student attending a STREAM centre to offset transportation costs and generate a savings of \$80K.

- **MOTION CARRIED -**

In Favour: Alexander, Barbieri, Cotton, DiMeo, Grella, lafrate, Saggese, Wigston

Opposed: Crowe

c) MYFRP PROPOSAL - HOME INSTRUCTION

Tim Laliberte, Superintendent of Education: School Leadership highlighted the procedures for the implementation of Home Instruction and to pinpoint areas for budgetary reductions.

MOTION: Wigston/Saggese

THAT in order to reduce expenses, school Principals adhere to the parameters identified within the Home Instruction Procedures.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** -

d) MYFRP PROPOSAL - GENERAL SCHOOL BUDGET (GSB)

C. McNeil, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board provided a summary of the MYFRP Proposal for the General School Budget. A suggested 5% GSB reduction will be included in the MYFRP. Concerns were expressed with the wide gap in GSB funding within our Board as there are many small schools. Concerns were also brought forward with the 5% being applied equally to every school. Staff were asked to incorporate these concerns into the plan.

Director De Faveri stated that the way the Motion is worded, it doesn't say definitively 5% per school and discussions will be held with the School Superintendents as to how to support our schools.

Chair Crowe passed the gavel to Vice-Chair lafrate.

Chair Crowe moved an amended Motion as follows:

MOTION: Crowe/Alexander

THAT the Board approve the MYFRP Proposal for the reduction of \$350K from the General School Budget (GSB) and report back to the Board on the saving strategies to be implemented.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** -

Vice-Chair lafrate returned the gavel to Chair Crowe

e) MYFRP PROPOSAL - HOSPITALITY

J. De Faveri, Director of Education, Foundation Chair and Secretary of the Board provided a summary of the MYFRP Proposal to reduce Hospitality expenses by \$20,000.

Vice-Chair lafrate stated she would be opposed to this as the Principals and teachers are our front line staff and not feeding them would be disrespectful. She further stated that if the Board moved not to feed our staff, then Trustees should not get food when they come to the Board. Director De Faveri responded indicating that this is not a suggestion to eliminate hospitality, but to look at ways we can achieve savings. Trustee Grella stated that parents expect school boards to be fiscally responsible and every dollar spent should be for classroom resources, therefore she would support the Motion.

Vice-Chair lafrate stated that Superintendent Wright had a fundraiser to assist our students in our schools and that initiative has done alot to assist students in need.

MOTION: Wigston/DiMeo

THAT the Board approve the MYFRP Proposal for the reduction of hospitality expenses by \$20K by 2025-26.

- **MOTION CARRIED** -

*For: Alexander, Barbieri, Cotton, Crowe, DiMeo, Grella, Wigston
Opposed: lafrate, Saggese*

f) MYFRP PROPOSAL - COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS (REVENUE)

K. Elgharbawy, Superintendent of Facilities Services and Plant provided an update with a specific focus on proposed fee increases and the feasibility of permitting outdoor facilities. The Board would introduce a 5% increase in permit fees in addition to the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustment to address rising operational costs and support long-term sustainability.

Chair Crowe stated that *Policy 616 Community Use of Schools* will be updated at the February 3, 2025 Policy Review Committee then brought forward for final approval at the February Board meeting.

MOTION: Wigston/DiMeo

THAT the Policy 616 Community Use of Schools be reviewed for opportunities to increase revenues by \$75,000 annually.

THAT staff conduct further analysis on outdoor rental feasibility, with a focus on incremental implementation for select facilities.

THAT staff continue monitoring the impact of these changes and provide an updated report within six months to assess progress and community feedback.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** -

g) MYFRP PROPOSAL - SECTIONS THAT SUPPORT SPECIAL PROGRAMS

J. Chiutsi, Superintendent of Education: School Leadership provided a summary of the MYFRP Proposal to reduce the Sections that Support Special Programs. The report proposed a reduction of 6 sections from the HPA program starting in the 2025-26 school year (3 sections from each school: SMK/HCCA). The report also proposed a reduction of 3 IB sections starting in 2026-27 from HCCA.

MOTION: Alexander/Wigston

THAT staffing of secondary specialty programs be implemented as described in the report for a net savings of \$200K.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** -

h) MYFRP PROPOSAL - SECONDARY TRANSPORTATION COST REDUCTIONS

G. De Girolamo, Coordinating Manager, Planning & Operations shared a report stating that as part of the MYFRP, staff are closely reviewing secondary transportation in an effort to identify \$1.5M in cost reductions starting 2026-27.

MOTION: DiMeo/Saggese

THAT \$1.5M in secondary transportation savings be included in the MYFRP and;

THAT staff develop cost-savings recommendations to achieve this target for Trustee consideration.

- **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** -

2025:115 DISCUSSION ITEM(S): NIL

2025:116 INFORMATION ITEM(S):

a) Multi-Year Financial Recovery Plan (MYFRP) Financials

C. McNeil, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board provided a report that summarized the compliance deficit and Multi-Year Financial Recovery Plan (MYFRP) savings assumptions for the 2025-26 to 2027-28 fiscal years.

2025:117 NOTICES OF MOTION: NIL

2025:118 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S) / REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

2025:119 PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

2025:120 ADJOURNMENT: 9:57 PM
ON MOTION: Saggese/Grella and CARRIED

Secretary of the Board

Chair of the Board