

Prince Edward Island Home and School Federation Inc.
Board Meeting Thursday, January 30, 2014
Royalty Centre, 40 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown, PE

1. Call to Order

President Pam Montgomery called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

In attendance: Pam Montgomery (President), Peter Rukavina (Vice President), Shelley Muzika (Treasurer), Ellen Campbell (Secretary), Ken Williams (Region 1 Director), Joanna Stewart, (Region 1 Director), Jessica Campbell (Region 1 Director), Margie Donovan (Region 2 Director), Lee Gauthier (Region 3 Director), Ricardo Angel (Region 3 Director), Michael Pendergast (Region 4 Director), Shirley Jay (Executive Director), Jean Davis (PEIHSF Parent Engagement Coordinator).

Regrets: Owen Parkhouse (Past President), Shelly Keenan (Region 4 Director)
Ellen Campbell acted as recording secretary.

2. Approval of Agenda January 30, 2014

MOTION: That the agenda be approved as presented. Moved by Shelley Muzika. Seconded by Joanna Stewart. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. Approval of Minutes of November 21, 2013 Meeting

MOTION: That the minutes of the November 21, 2013 meeting be approved with the addition to item b (Technology report by Ricardo Angel). See note below for further explanation. Moved by Peter Rukavina. Seconded by Jessica Campbell. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Note: Board approval of \$3500 to be used for the purchase of LEGO Robotics kits. Original motion to carry was dated November 21, 2013. Moved by Ricardo Angel. Seconded by Shelley Muzika. Motion was carried.

4. Business Arising

Action items 1, 6 and 7 from November 21, 2013 meeting were completed. Action items 2-5 were deferred.

5. President's Report

Pam Montgomery presented an oral report on recent activities.

- Various education groups have been formed, such as Dr. Glendenning's Education 20/20. They are very engaged and initiating important dialogue regarding the future of education on PEI.
- Pam is to meet in the coming weeks with the Chambers of Commerce and Education stakeholders regarding concerns over young adults soft work and social skills. Strategies to combat this trend need to be addressed.
- **Help My Child website: Shaun McCormack, PEI Teachers' Federation forwarded a parent**

survey regarding views on careers in the trades to Pam. Pam to forward survey to Shirley to circulate the board for input.

- Pam met with Chamber and Holland College to discuss course delivery and whether the current programs are meeting the demands of the workforce; also discussed other course delivery methods outside of the current model with the thought of reaching more adult learners; making courses more easily available, flexible to a broader spectrum of learners. They discussed the idea of more parent engagement so parents and students would have a better sense of course offerings and what prerequisites were required. Federation could support that initiative by sharing and communicating relevant information with its current membership.

ACTION ITEM: Pam to follow up with Holland College and discuss how the Federation could help further their parents' and students' engagement efforts.

- **SHAPES (School Health Survey grades 5-12)** media launch is scheduled for 1:00 pm, February 10th at UPEI. Shirley, Pam and Peter to attend. Pam and Sterling Carruthers, Department of Education, to discuss the Federation's ~~position~~ statement regarding the survey findings.
- Easter Seals Campaign: very school driven. EAs will be doing more to champion the cause in their respective schools. Easter Seals would like more engagement from parents.

6. Executive Director's Report

Shirley Jay presented a written report of recent activities. See January 30, 2014 submitted report for details.

7. Reports from Committees

a) Finance

Shelley Muzika provided a review of the PEIHSF financial position as of January 30, 2014. No bank statement was submitted.

- Shelley reported that there was approximately \$35,000 in the Federation's account, plus the value of GICs.
- Shelley and Shirley to review 2013 financial statements and submit documents and details to David Wright, **CGA**. 2013 Financial report will be ready for the Federation's annual meeting in April, 2014.
- Letter to Department of Education and Early Childhood Development regarding the Federation's request for increased funding for fiscal year 2013/2014 has been prepared and sent.

MOTION: The Financial Report be accepted as presented. Moved by Peter Rukavina. Seconded by Ellen Campbell. **MOTION CARRIED.**

b) Technology - Ricardo Angel

Ricardo demonstrated the LEGO Robotics kits.

- All pieces for the kits have been purchased. Manuals come with each kit. Instructions are clear and easy to follow – students as young as 6 and 7 can follow them.
- Most pieces for the kits can be purchased separately which is important for replacement purposes or in the event of lost or broken components. Discussed idea of purchasing spare pieces.
- Sign-out procedure will be available through the Federation’s website and will go “live” in February.
- Discussed options for sending the kits to schools – be it through government internal mail or Board office mail.

ACTION ITEM: Shirley to investigate options for sending LEGO Robotic kits to schools. All ideas are to be explored with emphasis on the most cost effective options.

- Ricardo met with the IBM consultant and representatives from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at the recent Provincial IT Committee meeting. Ricardo did not support their vision and mission statement as outlined in their initial draft report. Further work to be done by the committee in those areas.

c) School Trustees - Lee Gauthier

- Federation’s position statement letter regarding trustee elections was sent to Minister **McIsaac**. No follow-up to date.
- French Language School Board wants a French Board election in the spring of 2014 regardless of English Language Board’s position.
- Dividing elections would be very expensive and likely not an option, according to the Minister. Lee is waiting for an official response from the Minister of Education regarding trustee elections.

d) Communication - Ellen Campbell

According to the Federation’s Parent Engagement Survey 2013, 61% of parents surveyed thought that the Federation should be influencing or raising the profile of the StudentsAcheive system.

SAS objectives (according to the April 2009 StudentsAcheive Program Evaluation, DEECD):

Help teachers manage information;
Communicate learning information with parents;
Support teacher collaboration in a secure, real time environment.

- There is inconsistent use from teacher to teacher and school to school. Administrators who we’ve spoken to have very different points of view on how they should be involved – vis a vis

guardians of the system and its use by teachers. Many principals are adapting their own internal shared data base management programs.

- Communication to parents: Inconsistent use and the lack of useful and student or subject-centered information included by teachers has been cited as parents' major criticism of the program.
- Teacher collaboration: With the internal development of other 1st line data management programs within schools, once again SAS is taking a back seat. It's unreliable, slow and labor intensive. Schools are therefore defaulting to their own data management systems for internal use to better communicate student data and information.

The committee is trying to determine what follow-up has been done since 2009 and what recommendations from the survey have been instituted.

ACTION ITEM: Ricardo to ask Provincial IT group how many parents and schools use SAS and report findings back to the Communications Committee.

e) **Healthy Living/Wellness** – Pam Montgomery

Item deferred.

f) **Building the Network** – Peter Rukavina

- Peter reported on some of the meetings that PEIHSF executives have attended over the last few months, such as the Intermediate Principals' meeting as well as the meeting with Gerry Hopkirk. Both were viewed as insightful and productive and touched on a number of issues regarding the current state of the education system.
- Gerry as some alternative approaches on how the current system should move forward and was interested to find out what happened to many of the suggestions that were presented at the Education Summit, back a few years ago.
- Peter noted that the public library has great resources on the public school system on PEI.
- Peter also mentioned that in this week's newspaper there is a clipping of Queen's Square School in 1914. Interesting to see historical images of the Island's public schools.

MOTION: The PEIHSF website be modified so that local H&S associations can post their respective meeting dates. Moved by Peter Rukavina. Seconded by Ricardo Angel. **MOTION CARRIED**

g) **Staff/HR** – Lee Gauthier

The Federation has hired Jean Davis, Parent Engagement Coordinator and Cherie LeMoine, Office Assistant.

ACTION ITEM: Pam, Lee and Shirley to meet to discuss these staffing positions for the 2015 fiscal year.

h) Parent Engagement – Joanna Stewart

- The Committee hasn't met.
- Jean reported that not a lot of applications have been received to date. Those that have are missing substance.
- The idea of hiring Vicki Bryanton was discussed. Her role would be to lead proposal-writing sessions at various locations in the East, West and central regions of PEI with the hope of decreasing the fear and encouraging more local associations to participate in the program.
- Federation determined that the writing sessions could be managed by the Federation office and Vicki's expertise would not be necessary. Shirley and Jean could lead the sessions.

ACTION ITEM: Jean to create sample Parent Engagement application templates and upload to the Federation's website.

ACTION ITEM: Jean to include samples of successful applications that were received in the past as reference points for schools that are considering submitting their own Parent Engagement applications.

ACTION ITEM: Jean to create "trouble-shooting" page for reference on the Parent Engagement section of the Federation's website, page to include ideas such as "what to avoid; what ideas are not covered; etc".

ACTION ITEM: Jean to arrange three Parent Engagement Seminars (Eastern, Central, and Western locations).

MOTION: PEIHSF provide Jean with \$300 to offset Parent Engagement Seminar expenses. Moved by Shelley Muzika. Seconded by Michael Pendergast. **MOTION CARRIED**

i) Meetings – Pam Montgomery

- Preparation is underway for the PEIHSF Annual meeting in April. Speakers need to be determined and approached, packages sent to local association Presidents and theme of meeting determined.
- Resolutions are coming in and a Resolution Committee needs to be struck. Peter and Michael agreed to review resolutions on this committee. Resolutions will be circulated to the board.

i. Theme of Annual Meeting: The executive discussed various options such as Parent Engagement, Parents as Partners in Student Achievement and Communicating the PEIHSF Message.

ii. Format:

- The structure of the meeting must be determined – should the Federation ask the Minister to respond specifically to the presented resolutions? If so, Executive should meet with Minister McIsaac in advance of the annual meeting.
- Invite Superintendent Fleet to report on her meetings with local associations, and the new ELSB Strategic Plan.
- Peter suggested that the resolution portion of the meeting was viewed as formal and that discussion was very limited. Perhaps having round table discussions regarding the proposed

resolutions would provide better context for voting delegates. Also suggested was the idea of having the submitting schools provide briefing notes regarding their respective resolution.

- The idea of having schools that have submitted resolutions that actually resulted in change, at the local or provincial level, speak to the group of delegates.
- Shirley stressed that executive members need to take an active role in recruiting potential candidates for executive positions.
- Lee has agreed to co-chair the Nominations Committee with Owen Parkhouse.
- Should the school calendar be discussed at the annual meeting? Should we ask the Minister to address it? Parents want to know how the PD days are used and the benefit they provide to teachers and students.

iii. Resolutions: Resolution Committee to consider assigning resolutions to relevant PEIHSF sub-committees for review and follow-up. Sub-committees would be responsible for reporting back to executive members on their progress. This action would encourage accountability by the sub-committees and establishes a protocol for resolution follow-up.

***ACTION ITEM:** Meetings Committee to meet and map out a strategy for the annual meeting and how it will be formatted and presented.*

***ACTION ITEM:** Shirley to forward the AGM information to executive members for input.*

j. School Calendar – Pam Montgomery

- Pam attended the provincial meeting where PEITF rejected the DEECD's proposed calendar. Pam reported some push-back from the stakeholders at the meeting and suggested that the stakeholders were looking for the Federation's official position.
- The PEIHSF executive determined that it was not its responsibility to pick sides or support one position over another. Rather, it was determined that broader consultation with the Federation and local associations was imperative going forward and that all stakeholders, including parents, should be consulted on the proposed changes to the school calendar.
- Concern was raised that if the Calendar Committee doesn't effectively communicate the benefits of increased PD days to parents, the PEIHSF is going to have increasing difficulties engaging parents.
- From a PR perspective, the Federation has to be clear that it is not the decision maker on changes to the school calendar. The Federation's job is to hold the Department of Education and the Provincial Committee accountable if the new system of PD days doesn't work out. The Federation would be pleased to continue to work in consultation with all the stakeholders but will do so with parent input and feedback.
- In response to reading the results of the PISA scores, and seeing how well Finland performed overall, Peter contacted the Finnish equivalent of the PEIHSF. They would be willing to have a discussion about their system. Peter will follow-up.

***ACTION ITEM:** Peter to prepare statement to the press regarding the government's release of the school calendar and the Federations' position.*

***ACTION ITEM:** Peter to arrange meeting with Finnish Home & School group.*

k. Awards -

1) 2014 Heritage and Science Fairs

MOTION: Federation to award: 2 (two) \$25 prizes at 2014 Provincial Science Fair
2 (two) \$25 prizes at 2014 Provincial Heritage Fair

Moved by Peter Rukavina. Seconded by Margie Donovan. **MOTION CARRIED**

2) Extra Mile

The award recipients have been selected and the awards will be presented during ~~the PEIHSF Annual meeting in April 2014.~~ Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week.

l. Lowther Group -

The Federation has received an invitation to attend the 2014 Celebrations meeting with Linda Lowther's Consulting group to discuss linking 2014 celebrations with PEI's curriculum. Executive members who are able to participate should contact Shirley. Meeting is scheduled for February 13 at 9:30 am at the Quality Inn on the Hill, Charlottetown.

m. Western School Board Office Presence - Jessica Campbell

- Office is currently closed to the public.
- West Prince is concerned that there is no contact point or western representation in the Summerside office.
- ME Callaghan is presenting its concerns to the **ELSSBoard** at the February 25th Board meeting asking what can be done to change the current situation. Their concern centers on the issue of disseminating relevant regional information in a timely fashion. If there isn't representation in Summerside or an office in Western PEI, how can information regarding safety and travel be effectively assessed and further communicated to those who live in the area?
- Further, ME Callaghan is asking board who determines what schools are canceled in the event of inclement weather in the West, specifically when there isn't representation from the West? How can decisions on safety and other related issues be determined if no one is in the region to assess? The Federation will wait for the **ELSSBoard's** response before further action is considered.

8. Next Meeting: Next Board meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2014 in Summerside.

9. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m. Moved by Shelley Muzika.

**ACTION ITEMS arising from January 30, 2014
PEIHSF Board Meeting**

1. **ACTION ITEM:** Pam to follow up with Holland College and discuss how the Federation could help further their parents' and students' engagement efforts.
2. **ACTION ITEM:** Shirley to investigate options for sending LEGO Robotic kits to schools. All ideas are to be explored with emphasis on the most cost effective options.
3. **ACTION ITEM:** Ricardo to ask Provincial IT group how many parents and schools use SAS and report findings back to the Communications Committee.
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