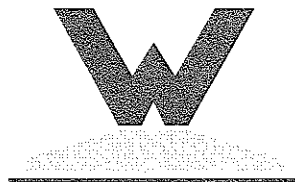


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WESTERN SCHOOL BOARD
of Prince Edward Island

July 13, 2011

Owen Parkhouse
President
PEI Home & School Federation Inc.
PO Box 1012
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7M4

Dear Mr. Parkhouse:

Further to the resolutions approved by your Federation at the Annual General Meeting, I provide the following information responses on behalf of the Western School Board.

Regards,

Gary Doucette
Board Chairperson

JUL 22 2011

Cc: WSB Trustees
FLSB Chairperson
ESD Chairperson

WESTERN SCHOOL BOARD
of Prince Edward Island

Resolution 1/11 - Whiteboards & FM Systems in Elementary Classrooms

Since 2007, the Western School Board has implemented a consistent and gradual plan to replace all of its chalk boards with white boards. It is the goal of the WSB to have all classrooms equipped with whiteboards by the beginning of the school year in September 2014.

FM Sound Systems are widely used throughout the Western School Board. Schools have been implementing FM Systems on a gradual, but increasing basis as their budgets permit

Resolution 2/11 – Science Fair

The Western School Board has supported and encouraged student participation in science fairs at the school level and provincially. Additionally, we have promoted and supported student participation in the Sanofi Aventis Bio-Talent Challenge, Annual PEI Association of Engineer Bridge Building contest, Provincial Envirothon etc

We recognize the importance of 21st century skills that include the development of critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills through curriculum delivery, the use of various instructional approaches and extracurricular activities.

Participation in activities such as science and heritage fairs, have been at the discretion of the teachers, students and schools. We will continue to promote and support voluntary participation in these activities.

Resolution 3/11 – Allocation of Educational Assistants in Schools

The Western School Board is a strong advocate of inclusive education practices and will continue to work with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in the allocation of Educational Assistants for the purpose of successfully meeting the programming goals for our children with special needs.

Resolution 4/11 – Equal Access to Value Based Educational Experiences

There was a similar resolution in 2010 – Resolution 5/10 Equal Access to Extra Curricular Activities. Here was the response:

As we have indicated in the past, there is no question that educational experiences may occur outside the classroom and occur in a variety of venues and through a variety of activities. In fact, all schools regularly include such experiences as an integral component of their programs

The issue is not access based on geographic location of the school and the proposed event as much as the type of activity and its relative worth in comparison to the amount of time missing from classroom instruction. In terms of approving participation by students and staff in such events and activities, the Superintendent/Director/Principal is expected to make his/her decision on the educational value of said activity, the amount of instructional time lost to allow participation in the event, and, as part of this decision an assessment of whether it is an educational experience connected to learning outcomes or merely entertainment. As you point out in your resolutions, our focus needs to be increased student achievement for all learners; therefore, proposed field trips and excursions must be viewed through that lens.

We have schools that would be geographically distant from a number of activities within our own Board or in other parts of the Province; for example, we routinely see schools from all areas of the board participate in events and activities at many locations both near and far (ex. Tignish, Summerside, Charlottetown, Eastern PEI, and including off-Island). These trips occur on a regular basis. The approval is based on their educational merit, not distance.

WESTERN SCHOOL BOARD
of Prince Edward Island

Resolution 5/11 – Minister’s Directive & School Board Policy for Reporting Student Health & Safety Issues to Parents

In May of 2011 all Western School Board schools were instructed that effective September 1, 2011 a parent representative from each local Home & School (H&S) Committee is to become a member of each school Joint Occupational Health & Safety (JOHS) Committee. To that end, the following points:

- Each parent representative shall be nominated by their local H&S membership. It is recognized that a school staff member may also be a H&S member, therefore, through the nomination process, it is conceivable that the parent representative and staff member may be one and the same.
- All JOHS members, including parent representatives, are encouraged to commit for a minimum of a two year term with a maximum of four years
- The name of the parent representative shall be submitted by the school principal to the School Safety Consultant (Joan Moore-Dennis) by June 30th each year. The School Safety Consultant will forward each name to the President of the PEI Home & School Federation
- The role of the parent representative will be that of an observer and liaison. The parent representative will have no voting rights.
- JOHS meetings will be held monthly at each school between September and June.
- The schedule of monthly JOHS meetings will be decided by each school committee. Parent participation will accommodate the schedule agreed upon by the school JOHS Committee.
- Monthly records of discussion (outstanding items only) will be submitted to the School Safety Consultant for follow up, if necessary, by the school board property manager
- Parent representatives will report monthly to their local Home & School membership.
- Parent representatives will participate in annual H&S inspections of their school.
- Parent representative will be informed immediately if/when any potential health risks are identified that may impact children in the school. Ongoing feedback on identified issues will be provided to the parent representative who, in turn, will share with the home and school committee.
- JOHS Committees, including the parent representative, will receive training from the School Safety Consultant in the fall of 2011 (and subsequent years as deemed necessary) in the following areas: terms of reference, roles and responsibilities, interpretation of the PEI Occupational Health & Safety Act, Provincial Schools Health & Safety Manual, School Inspections, reporting and documentation of incidents and potential issues, etc.
- Any expense incurred by a parent representative through attendance at monthly meetings and/or training sessions will be the sole responsibility of the local Home & School and/or parent representative.
- If parent representation on school JOHS Committees become problematic for any reason, consultation with the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, President of the PEI Home & School Federation, School Safety Consultant, School Board Representatives and/or the Provincial Director of Occupational Health and Safety shall be considered, to discuss and resolve where necessary

Resolution 6/11 – Provision of Translation Resources to Support Newcomer Families

The Western School Board views parents as partners. We will work with the Home and School Association to ensure that, in schools where there is a significant non-English speaking population of parents sharing a given language, translation be provided. In June, our Western School Board Principals were contacted to determine if there was a significant non-English speaking population of parents in their respective schools in need of translation services. At this time, Principals in four of our schools indicated they have one (1) family each who they felt would be in need of translation services.

WESTERN SCHOOL BOARD
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Resolution 7/11 – Academic Outcomes

The Western School Board agrees that the purpose of the public education system is to provide students with the skills and knowledge that will allow them to pursue post secondary studies or successfully transition into the work force. We recognize the need to "raise the bar" and work with diligence and precision to close the achievement gap. We recognize a particular need to focus on literacy from Kindergarten to Grade Twelve. To that end, the Western School Board is in the process of reviewing our student achievement data, including our performance on the common assessments, as part of a wider needs assessment. From this, we will establish and publish ambitious goals in terms of literacy and we will focus our efforts on building teacher capacity in order to increase literacy achievement for all students.

Schools are accountable for student achievement and strive to support students to meet the academic outcomes outlined by the Department of Education. We will continue to promote high yield instructional strategies and use student assessment data, including PISA data and PEI common assessment data, to make informed decisions about instruction and increase student achievement across all grades.