

**Prairie Rose School Division No. 8  
Regular Board Meeting  
MINUTES**

**Tuesday, March 8, 2011**

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**Present:** M. Peers, G. Westgard, K. Cooper, P. Heller, A. Frank, G. Dennis, S. Angle, B. Wickens, D. Nicholls – Superintendent, B. Andjelic –D. Superintendent, B. Volkman – A. Superintendent, P. Cocks – Secretary Treasurer, A. Baron - Communications

**Absent:** None.

**Media:** K. Bak and M. Waterhouse - CHAT TV, R. Sanchez – Prairie Post, J. Rieger – Cypress Courier / Commentator, A. Stephenson and Photographer – Medicine Hat News, M. McKinnon – CJCY News.

**Other:** V. Miller, T. Bloomfield.

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**1. Call to Order**

M. Peers called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

Additions to the agenda:

- None

Moved by G. Dennis to approve the March 8, 2011 Regular Board Meeting Agenda as presented.

**CARRIED (2011-123)**

**2. Approval of the Minutes**

2.1 Regular Board Meeting – February 1, 2011

Moved by G. Westgard to approve the February 1, 2011 Regular Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

**CARRIED (2011-124)**

M. McKinnon joined the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

### 3. Monitoring

#### 3.1 Trustee Reports

M. Peers thanked the Board for their thoughts and wishes for her family while they dealt with a recent family medical crisis.

B. Wickens shared that IF Cox was hosting a DREAMS event on March 17<sup>th</sup> called *Hope: Visual Through Art*. The evening portion of the day is open to the public and consists of a presentation as well as an art show and fundraiser auction.

S. Angle recently attended school council meetings in his area. Senator Gershaw is busy preparing for the upcoming technology conference on March 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. This will also be the 14<sup>th</sup> year of a mini basketball workshop camp for kids at the school. A fundraiser is taking place at Bow Island Elementary to help a special needs student at the school. It was also asked if a fact sheet outlining possible financial scenarios based on the recent budget announcement could be shared with the school council chairs.

G. Westgard and B. Andjelic recently attended the REAL grand opening in Oyen on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. The new community centre in Oyen also held their grand opening on the same day. G. Westgard and Superintendent D. Nicholls attended a Board Chairs meeting in Edmonton.

G. Dennis shared that Seven Persons School recently unveiled a new clay mural. The artwork is beautifully displayed and each student contributed to its production.

A. Frank reported that IF Cox School is looking at some possible lighting changes in the classrooms. The school is also hosting the *Big Crunch* event on March 10<sup>th</sup> that involves participants from four different school divisions.

P. Heller shared that a team of Eagle Butte students attended the curling zones and did really well. At Eagle Butte, a special reading project has been introduced to help encourage students to get involved in reading and writing. The book reports are shared on the Eagle Butte website. In addition, the teacher dresses up to serve students refreshments when they get together to discuss the book as a group.

K. Cooper shared that various sporting activities at Foremost School, including senior league playoffs are taking place. Students will also be receiving their report cards this month. A number of art projects are on display and the spring talent show is coming up. K. Cooper and A. Frank were both recently interviewed by a professor at Lethbridge University about promising practices in Prairie Rose.

3.2 Video Presentation – A. Baron

A. Baron shared the February *Around the School Yard* video. Featured schools included Jenner, Schuler and Oyen Public schools. The video can be viewed on the Prairie Rose website at [www.prrd.ab.ca](http://www.prrd.ab.ca).

V. Miller joined the meeting at 10:23 a.m.

**4. Action Items**

4.1 Attendance Area Appeal – Jenner School

V. Miller explained that a family living on the north side of the Red Deer River was looking for approval to send their child to Jenner School instead of Oyen Public School. The mileage either way is similar as is the overall travel time. This is the first request from that area as the student would have attended Bindloss School had it remained open. V. Miller explained that there is at least one other family in the area that may make the same request in the future.

Moved by G. Westgard that the Board approve the appeal and allow the student residing at SW 17-22-5 W4 in the Oyen attendance area be bused to Jenner School.

**CARRIED (2011-125)**

4.2 S Endorsement for Field / Sports Trips

V. Miller explained that it has been mandated by the government that all school bus drivers must have the S Endorsement course. Currently a number of parents and teachers are driving buses for fieldtrips without the course. It is being recommended that all drivers be required to have the S Endorsement course before being allowed to transport students in Prairie Rose schools. K. Cooper did express some concern about the cost involved to have the drivers take the course.

Moved by B. Wickens that the Board direct all operators of school buses transporting students on school trips and sports trips be required to complete the School Bus Driver Improvement course and have their “S” Endorsement on their operator’s license. A driver would have 12 months from their first date of hire to complete the course and obtain the “S” Endorsement.

**CARRIED (2011-126)**

G. Dennis commended V. Miller and all the Prairie Rose bus drivers who have done a great job of getting students to and from school despite the poor weather conditions throughout the winter. A letter from the Board and Administration will be sent out to the contractors.

V. Miller left the meeting at 10:43 p.m.

#### 4.3 Kindergarten Programming

D. Nicholls provided an overview of Full-Day Kindergarten programming being offered in Prairie Rose. In the past, the Board has offered the program in communities where numbers warranted. Based on demand, the length of program differed from community to community. This year the Division is facing a slight decline in enrollment and reduced funding. Schools are currently taking registrations and would like a decision on the issue. P. Cocks explained that the program cost the division \$210,000 for the 2010-2011 year with only \$43,330 of that cost being recuperated through fees. A. Frank shared a request from IF Cox principal M. Gogolinski who would like to see three full days of kindergarten for an equivalent of .6 instead of the current .8. The additional teacher time would aid the PUF Junior Kindergarten program which is funded through coded students. B. Andjelic explained that allowing one school to move to .6 would only invite more requests from other schools.

Moved by S. Angle that the Board return to .5 Kindergarten Programming for the 2011-2012 school year.

**CARRIED (2011-127)**

Moved by A. Frank that the Board approve IF Cox School to offer .6 Kindergarten programming for the 2011-2012 school year provided the school funds anything over .5 programming.

**DEFEATED (2011-128)**

M. Peers recessed the meeting for 5 minutes to allow for interviews.

T. Bloomfield joined the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

K. Bac and M. Waterhouse left the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

#### 6.4 2011-12 Grant Announcement

P. Cocks provided a brief summary of what the 2011-2012 grant announcement means for the Prairie Rose School Division. Overall a 4.73% decline is projected however with a one-time grant that decrease will be limited to 3.5%. Factoring in enrollment decline the overall decrease will be 5% or 3.8% with the one-time injection. The overall dollar decrease is equivalent to \$2.4 million dollars. These numbers will require the Board to make some very difficult decisions. Induction, PD, Enhanced Kindergarten among other programs will need to be reviewed. Staffing reductions will also have to be considered. D. Nicholls explained that there are many questions that cannot be answered yet, however it is safe to say that Prairie Rose was impacted greatly by the grant cuts.

6.4 2011-12 Grant Announcement Cont.

The MLA's have already been contacted and the Division's concerns have been expressed. It was explained that there are not enough in reserves to cover the entire funding shortfall.

V. Miller joined the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

6.3 Redcliff Transportation Review

D. Nicholls explained that the Division has been reviewing the transportation budget, due to deficits the past few years. A committee was formed to examine how some of those costs could be recovered in Redcliff where the majority of the students bussed are not eligible for funding. Currently only 30 Redcliff students receive funding out of the 240 students who are being transported in the community. A letter has been sent out to parents explaining the funding shortfall and laying out a number of options for recovering some of those costs. The proposed changes include double bussing and fees. Meetings have been planned at each school in March and April to explain the financial situation and the proposal. A Board decision on will be required in May.

V. Miller left the meeting at 11:49 a.m.

A. Stephenson left the meeting at 11:51 a.m.

3.3 Beyond Walls Outreach School

T. Bloomfield provided a general overview of Beyond Walls Outreach School. Currently the outreach school has 236 students enrolled. Overall enrollment for the year is 290 students. Students of any age are eligible to access the school and just about any course or elective is available including Foods and Physical Education. The programs are designed to be done without the aid of a teacher. The average cost per subject is \$20 for school aged children however the program is free for Prairie Rose students. Adult fees are considerably higher at \$500 per course. The overall completion rate for the school is around 68%. Support for students is available at Beyond Walls for most subjects through the two teachers employed by the school.

Changes over the past year include the revamping of various forms and documents, the creation of a student handbook, more programs being offered through Alberta Distance Learning, increased tutoring time, and additional video conferencing. The current fee structure is being re-evaluated for the upcoming school year.

3.3 Beyond Walls Outreach School Cont.

Some ongoing concerns include the continued loss of materials and withdrawals, student contact and support, the maintenance of student's records and the School Cash.Net program.

M. Peers thanked T. Bloomfield for his presentation and congratulated him on the good work being done at the school.

T. Bloomfield and the media left the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

M. Peers recessed the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

M. Peers reconvened the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

**5. Superintendents' Reports**

5.1 Superintendents' Reports

B. Andjelic reminded the Board that the PD Program for March 18<sup>th</sup> was available. All trustees are invited to join in the sessions, but registration is required.

B. Andjelic explained that a drafted policy on curriculum would be coming forward to the Board for approval. Timetable changes would also be coming forward to follow through with legislation.

B. Andjelic reminded the Student / Board Committee that the next meeting date still needed to be set.

D. Nicholls explained that he had been approached by a staff member who suggested putting together a "think tank" group to discuss budget restraints and the upcoming budget shortfall.

D. Nicholls reported that he and B. Andjelic met with the first group of administrators who requested feedback and guidance. The meetings are an opportunity for division office administration to give feedback and guidance in an informal manner.

**6. Other Reports / Information Items**

6.1 ASBA

A. Frank reported on the previous ASBA Executive meeting. Teacher work hours were discussed. The next meeting takes place on Wednesday, March 9, 2011.

6.2 PSBAA

K. Cooper passed out a booklet on Information and Instructions – *Pertaining to Appointments of Commissioners For Oaths*. PSBAA was looking to schedule a meeting with the Board for later this spring. The PSBAA was also looking to see if school boards wanted to join in their upcoming advertising campaign. The money would allow boards to access unlimited PSBAA produced advertising through their website. Boards were also being asked to use the information in the *New Horizon's for Education* booklet and set up meetings with their MLA's to discuss the issues.

**10. Adjournment**

Moved by S. Angle at 1:50 p.m. that the Regular Board Meeting be adjourned.

**CARRIED (2011-129)**

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Marian Peers, Board Chair

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Pat Cocks, Secretary-Treasurer