

Education Committee Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2013 – 5:00 p.m
North Bay and Parry Sound Boardrooms

Present:

Chair Jeff Serran, Trustees Kathy Hewitt, Jim Beatty, Al Bottomley, Randy Sheppard, Director Geof Botting, Superintendents Tim Graves, Terry Blair, Roslyn Bowness, Principal of Program Melanie Gray, Executive Assistant Sue Walker

Chair Serran called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

The order of the agenda was altered slightly, moving Me to We programming to item 1, and Review of music programs to item 2.

Me to We Programming

Bruce Downey attended the Education Committee meeting and spoke on Me to We and the positive influence it is having with our students. The Near North District School Board, in partnership with the Me to We organization, will be running the Student Leadership Program "Take Action " in all our secondary schools and their elementary feeder schools. This is the tenth year the Board and Me to We have been working together developing student leaders. There will be 70 high school students and over 240 elementary students who will receive 3 full-day workshops over the course of the year. There are currently 10 workshop days scheduled in November, 10 days in February and 10 days in April. Mr. Downey also suggested there may be an opportunity to host a mini We Day in North Bay in 2015.

Trustee Beatty requested more concrete information be shared on how the Near North students are valuing the program. He questioned if there is a way of incorporating values for a student participating in such a program, and relating that to our desire for success in student achievement. Mr. Downey will share impact reports with the committee.

Mr. Downey also suggested the Board may want to consider signing a multi-year contract with Me to We. Trustee Hewitt stated the Board presently signs the contract and a year to year basis, but stated she would support signing a multi-year contract. It was suggested the contract may cost approximately \$80,000.00 per year. Trustee Beatty stated if the Board is considering looking at multi-year funding, the Board will need objective criteria on how to measure the success.

Recommendation:

Moved by Kathy Hewitt, seconded by Jim Beatty

That the Education Committee recommend the Near North District School Board move from a 1 year contract with Me to We to a 5 year contract.

CARRIED

Review of Music Programs

Melanie Gray, Principal of Program, and Superintendent Tim Graves spoke on the music initiatives presently offered in the Near North District School Board.

The music curriculum is intended to help students develop an understanding and appreciation of music, as well as the ability to create and perform it, so that they will be able to find a lifelong source of enjoyment and personal satisfaction in music. An interesting and challenging program in music not only develops practical artistic skills but also enables students to sharpen their ability to reason, to think critically and to explore their emotional responses to the music. Students develop musical literacy through singing, playing, moving, performing, creating, and listening actively.

Ms Gray has had the opportunity to visit the Resource Centres and was pleased to see the amount of resources available to staff. Staff also indicated the resources are being used a great deal throughout the year

Discussion took place on equity across the system. Director Botting indicated it's often difficult to run programs in smaller schools as there is not always enough capacity to put a music teacher in a school.

Chair Serran questioned the amount of time teachers are spending teaching music. Currently, there is no minimum time stipulated by the Ministry.

In secondary schools, inequities are often exacerbated as courses are run by student demand. Music, along with other courses, often goes in cycles, depending on the teacher expertise, enrolment of the school, etc. Director Botting suggested if the enrolment drops below 800 students in a secondary school, a full range of programs cannot be offered.

Trustee Sheppard suggested checking with other Boards to see how they are dealing with this.

EPO Funding – (Extra Program Offering)

Director Botting explained that Extra Program Offering funds are separate from the Board-based budget. This is funding the Province allocates to the Board to offer specific programs. While most of the EPO funding is used for Professional Development, some program staff are funded with these monies. This funding fluctuates and often has a specific timeframe in which to spend it.

Trustee Hewitt has requested a more indepth report be shared at a future Education Committee Meeting.



Update on FSL Review

Deferred to the January 21, 2014 meeting.

EQAO Results

Deferred to the January 21, 2014 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.