

MINUTES

Neerlandia Public Christian School Council
Neerlandia Christian Education Society
Annual General Meeting
Monday, November 5, 2018 @7:30PM

Attendance—Annemiek Elzinga, Marian Rayment, Juanita Henschel, Janice Wierenga (Gary), Lindy Wiart, Amanda Batty, Charlene Nanninga (Wes), Lee Anne Schmidt, Randy and Carla Strydhorst, Lorna Strydhorst, Marjorie Tuininga, Wes Wierenga, Brett Seatter, Kim Sybesma, Debbie Fisher, Renee Rentz, Lisa Gehring, Jennifer Tuininga, Adam Crabbe

1. **Welcome**—Steve DeVries

2. **Devotions**—Annemiek Elzinga

3. **Adopt Agenda**

4. **Review and Approve NPCSC/NCES AGM Minutes**—November 6, 2017. Meeting minutes from last year read and approved.

5. **Nomination for Board Member**—First Call—The NCES nominates Sheri Strydhorst and Katherine Nanninga

6. **Reports**

a. NCES/NPCSC Report—Steve Devries reports. Attached.

b. Principal Report—Lisa Gehring reports for last year with power point presentation with photos. She reports that God is working in our school and some of the various events during the year, including anti bullying day, Rocks and Minerals play, High tea, 100 days of school, St Nick's Day and the door decorating contest. The school also started supporting new charity called LAMP which supports Sally Ross school. NPCSC staff began process of discerning their place in God's story and began sharing passages from the Bible with students that resonated with them. Students were encouraged to begin this process as well. There was a final bittersweet concert combined with Pembina North which was Kathy Hellinga's last concert as teacher. The school also said farewell to Jim Bosma and the DARE officer. Mrs Gehring said she also enjoyed her farewell from the school. Reminded everyone that we are all part of God's community. Encouraged NCES to continue supporting PCCE as the TFT program is very beneficial.

Juanita Henschel stood up to share some thoughts about PCCE membership. She stated she is aware the fees are hefty for PCES. She stated that a new teacher shared how PCCE supports Christianity being incorporated into all subject matter. Learned each separate component at recent conference this teacher attended. Stated it was invaluable support for Christian school teacher. Juanita had attended same conference and stated there are many supports and resources. It helps keep teachers accountable, focused and committed. Also, there are benefits from connecting with other Christian colleagues and PCCE website is improving accessibility.

7. **Nomination for Board Member**—Second Call—No further nominations made.

8. **Reports**

a. School Trustee—Jennifer Tuininga, as attached

b. Financial Report—Randy presents budget for upcoming year. He proposes to adjust fiscal year end to coincide with school year. Question asked about miscellaneous income —

Randy reports it was from donation from student body. Question asked about functions income –Randy reports that is was from PHSSAM and that we won't host for several years. Motion made to accept budget as presented. Motion approved.

9. Nomination for Board Member—Third Call—No further nominations made.

10. Election of New Board Members—Randy motions to accept names NCES nominated. Motion seconded and approved.

11. Questions/Comments—Lorna Strydhorst thanks board for their support of the school.

12. Closing—Steve DeVries

13. Adjournment.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT – November 2018

I was preparing for this meeting and my report and I started wondering, “Did we do this anything worth including in a report this year?” As I do every year I started flipping through our minutes and was quickly reminded that school years seem to fly by because there's a lot going on! Some yearly activities we participate in every year include the pancake breakfast, chicken nugget lunch and Terry Fox Run to name a few. I think an important role of the school council and Christian Education Society is to facilitate building and strengthening the community that supports our school here in Neerlandia. These events all do that in a different way, and this past year we also held for the first time a movie night. This was very well attended, and I think enjoyed by everyone. We were also able to gather as community to wish Mr. Bosma and Mrs. Hellinga well in their retirement and Mrs. Gehring all the best in her new position at Pembina Hills.

Other priorities of the NCES and School Council are promoting Christian education within the Pembina Hills school division and making it more accessible. We continue to run the preschool program within the school which brings families into our school for the first time, and we've continued to subsidize bussing fees for families that choose to send children to NPCS from outside our boundary to help lighten their financial burden. We also participate in the two Council of School Council meetings held at the PHPS division office each year.

One note of excitement for the NCES is the completion of the outdoor classroom project we started a little over a year ago. We are very thankful for the support of our community in helping raise funds for this and are happy with how it looks and hope the trees planted help beautify the school grounds for years to come. A special thank you to the TD bank Friends of the Environment Foundation for their grant, to PHPS maintenance staff for their help installing benches, to Platinum J Enterprises for constructing the classroom, to Annemiek and her sub-committee that made most of the plans and to the many volunteers that helped plant new trees, clean up dead trees and put together benches and tables.

Something that I've learned during my time serving on this board is that relationships are very important. We have a great relationship with our Pembina Hills school board trustee; Jennifer attends all our school council meetings, is very good at keeping us in the loop as to what is going on at the school board level and is open to questions, concerns and comments from us. An example of when the importance of this relationship was very apparent was when we found out we were going to have a new principal starting this year. We were not involved in the decision as to who would become the new principal, but our trustee knows what our priorities are, and she is able to be our eyes and ears when these decisions happen. And, I must say, we are excited by the prospect of working with Mr. Seatter for years to come, he is a great fit for our school community! We have also been cultivating relationship with our new Superintendent Dave Garbutt, who I'm happy to report, in my estimation, is friend of our school and the alternative program we offer.

Overall, we have much to be thankful for at the Neerlandia Public Christian School; engaged parents and a greater community that continues to support us, excellent staff that put students first, and beautiful facilities. There are things we must continue to strive to improve on, but in the end, we take comfort in the fact that we are in God's hands and trust that He will continue to guide us.

NCES/NPCS Annual General Meeting

November 5, 2018

During the 2017-2018 school year, Pembina Hills served 3,818 students in 11 local community schools, 2 Hutterite colony schools and 2 outreach schools. In addition, the division operates Vista Virtual School – an online school that serves a large and diverse student population in a distance learning environment. Vista Virtual School serves approximately 10,000 students of which about 550 are full-time.

Pembina Hills is also responsible for the operations of the Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC) under a service agreement with Alberta Education. ADLC provides distance education services to jurisdictions across the province. While ADLC provides student instruction to students registered in other schools across the province, the responsibility for those students lies with the registering school. This past year a lot of time was spent on restructuring and centralizing ADLC in Barrhead.

As a locally elected school trustee I represent the electors in the ward of Barrhead North – which includes two Pembina Hills schools Neerlandia Public Christian School and Fort Assiniboine School. For each school I attend school council meetings, write newsletter articles, and attend graduations, special events and awards celebrations. I advocate on behalf of the schools I represent, but the board makes decisions based on what is best for the division as a whole.

As a school trustee I attend a lot of meetings related to our school division and various committees, as well as provincially. The board meets with our municipalities and MLA to ensure that we are working together on projects that benefit our communities, and advocating at the provincial level for the issues of Pembina Hills. Partnering with the Barrhead Chamber of Commerce, County of Barrhead and Town of Barrhead on the VIP event for new staff was a unique opportunity that along with the PHPS relocation incentive brought 29 new staff to live within our communities this past year.

In June of the past year, the board passed a motion to withdraw its membership from the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA) effective December 31, 2018. The board continues to hold a membership with the Alberta School Boards Association (which represents all 61 public/separate/francophone school boards in the province). The board attends their two annual meetings, has representatives at the monthly zone meetings, and participates in other PD during the year. This provides us with an

opportunity to collaborate with other boards, further our learning, advocate at a provincial level, and stay on top of educational issues. For the last two years I have served as one of ten directors on the provincial board representing the 29 school boards within zone 2/3, my term ends this month.

It was a learning and growing year as a board as we had elections in October 2017 and we had four newly elected trustees, and 3 seasoned trustees. Over the year trustees have participated in learning activities to further develop their understanding of education, PHPS operations, board governance and their role as trustees.

One key role of the board is policy development – we have a board policy committee that reviews new provincial legislation and ensures that policies are revised or created when required. As an alternate Christian school within Pembina Hills, NPCS staff and students abide by the administrative procedures and policies of Pembina Hills. Decisions made at the school board level apply to all of the schools within the division. School sites manage their own individual budgets with some areas being supported by a Co-op pool and staff from regional office.

As a locally elected body our meetings are open to the public and you are welcome to join us! You can also read about what the board is doing in the ‘Board News’ or minutes which you can subscribe to by email or are posted on the division website. In addition, this year the ‘Board News’ is being published bi-weekly in our local papers.

Although the board has many employees, there is only one whom we directly supervise and that is Superintendent David Garbutt. The relationship between the board and Superintendent is crucial to the operations of the division. Over the past year the board supported him in his role and developed effective two-way communication. The board and administration are building a culture of open communication within the division where more than one party interacts with the board, and staff members are able to communicate in a safe and secure environment. We continually seek to understand and respect our differing roles as governors and administration.

The PHPS board works well as a team and we are honoured to serve our schools and communities. We take our responsibilities seriously in overseeing the education of our students and the operations of the division, and are always looking for ways to improve. We welcome feedback on our work, and partnerships that benefit the education of our students.

Thank you for your support. I would welcome any questions.

Jennifer Tuininga
Board Chair, Pembina Hills Public Schools

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