

Minutes

Neerlandia Public Christian School Council

Monday, November 18, 2024 @ 7:00PM

Location: NPCSC Staff Room

Present: Kirstie Schatz, Julaine Greilach, Dallas Lee, Victoria Kane, Kim Sybesma, Shawna Sotnikow, Prakash Raju, Cassie Wierenga, Sandra Olthuis, Charlene Fleming, Laura Braucht, Alanna Breitreitz

1. Call to Order
 - 7:01 pm
2. Devotions- Kim Sybesma
3. Adopt Agenda
 - MSC
4. Approve NPCSC Minutes – Sept 23 & Oct 29, 2024
 - Correction Sept 23 minutes: Change “Fischer” to “Fisher”
 - Correction Oct 29 minutes: Delete “Agenda” at top of page
 - MSC
5. Business from Minutes
 - Policy 30 “A Place for All” Further Discussion
 - No further discussion
6. Reports
 - a. Principal Report – Prakash
 - 2025/26 School Calendar Approval
 - Staffing Updates
 - See attached
 - b. School Trustee Report – Victoria Kane
 - See attached
 - c. TFT Lead- Kim Sybesma Report on Conferences
 - See attached
7. New Business
 - a. Council School Council Meeting- Dec 10, 5pm PHSD Office
 - Kirstie to attend
8. Adjournment
 - 8:26 pm

Next Meeting: January 20, 2025- 7pm

Principal's Report for NPCSC
Prakash Raju
2024-11-18

Christian Educators' Convention

I absolutely enjoyed the Christian Educators' Convention, and I went to some very relevant sessions. I went to sessions on loving our indigenous neighbors and restorative practice for refugees, immigrants and newcomers. Our keynote speaker was also very good. Carolyn Arends spoke on how encounters with creation and creativity help us to draw closer to God.

The only tricky thing was that the drive was rather long, but we survived and I had some great conversations with the teachers that I traveled with.

I hope all of the financial pieces are working for our NCES Treasurer.

Remembrance Day Assembly

We had a wonderful Remembrance Day Assembly, and it was well attended by our community. I was pleased with all of the student participation in the assembly.

St. Nick's Day

Plans are well underway for our St. Nick's Day festivities on Friday, December 6. Thank you to the NCES for sponsoring the pizza lunch. We have put out a request to students to bring in \$2 each to help with the cost of pizza.

Christmas Concert

Plans are underway for our Christmas Concert, which will be held at the Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church at 7pm on Wednesday, December 18, with the prelude starting at 6:30pm. The musical we are doing is called "We Knead a Little Christmas". Practices will start soon. Dress Rehearsal (open to public) will be December 17 @ 1:00.

Staffing update

Tomorrow, I will be sending out a note to parents of students in Mrs. Thompson's Gr 3 class to say that she is now on medical leave and she will most likely not return before her baby arrives. We are well on our way with regard to finding someone to continue with her class for the rest of the school year. We will have subs covering her classes for this week, and possibly part or all of next week. We should have someone in place by Dec 2; however, I am hopeful her replacement will be able to start before then.

TfT 101 sessions

TfT 101 occurred the day before the Christian Educators' Convention, and I was unable to attend, but Jeremy Horlings made a special online session for Ft. McMurray Christian School that I was able to attend. I will be attending a second session before the end of November. I appreciate our membership with PCCE, because that allows me to attend these sessions without cost.

Information I gathered with regard to possible calendar options for 2024-25

25% of school council members like the November Break

75% prefer to start late – working parents find the November Break hard – would also want to have Nov 10 off if starting late (in addition to Nov 11)

Half of school council wants to have school on for students on September 30

Others were undecided

It is fine to have the startup day during September. For alternative calendars, Fridays are preferred for PD days.

Similarly in January, school council members have no concern with Jan 30 being a PD day, and parents like to have PD Days on Friday.

**Pembina Hills School Division
Board Report for School Council Meeting
Victoria Kane**

Policy 30: A Place for All: The board recently approved Policy 30, which is committed to fostering a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all members of our school communities. This policy ensures alignment with legislation, including the Education Act, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Alberta Human Rights Act. The policy affirms that our division supports diversity in all its forms while protecting the rights of all members of our school community. It emphasizes a shared responsibility to create a culture of respect, belonging, and dignity in our schools.

Input from your school council executive played a significant role in shaping the discussions around Policy 30 and the amendments that were made. Two key amendments included the explicit citation of the *Education Act*, and the addition of clarifying the division's commitment of *fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all educational programs provided through Pembina Hills School Division*. These amendments reflect our shared commitment to meeting the varied needs of all students and families across the division while ensuring that every voice is valued and respected. This process highlights the importance of collaboration between the board and our school communities in shaping policies that everyone sees themselves reflected in.

Bus Safety Alert: Dangerous Fly-Bys

The division has observed an alarming increase in incidents of vehicles **illegally passing stopped school buses with flashing red lights**, a dangerous violation known as "fly-bys." These incidents have been reported both in rural areas and within town limits, posing a serious risk to the safety of our students. We are committed to student safety and urge our communities to take the following actions:

- **Stop when red lights are flashing:** This is a legal requirement and critical for student safety.
- **Exercise caution near bus stops:** Whether in neighborhoods or on rural routes, drivers should remain vigilant.
- **Promote bus safety education:** Families are encouraged to remind children to wait for the driver's signal before crossing the road.

By working together, we can help ensure all students travel to and from school safely. The board invites feedback and suggestions from school councils and community members on how we can collectively address this critical issue.

Enrollment Update: The latest enrollment report showed variations in student numbers across the division, with Neerlandia Public Christian School experiencing growth - adding 4 students, bringing your total to 262 this year!

New Employee Cell Phone Use AP: which fosters a professional and safe learning environment for employees. They are expected to model responsible device usage, limit personal communications during instructional hours.

Conferences in 2024

Surrey: Teaching for Transformation Site Visit (March)

- We got to review teaching for transformation (always getting developed and improved)
- visited a couple of different schools in the lower mainland
- experience their celebration of learning that these schools put on for their parents.
- At first, it was disheartening because we got to see the best of the best and we thought we would never measure up.
- Then Juanita and I got to sit down and go through all the things that we do and have and what things we could work on.
- We had time to work on our three year plan of how we're going to proceed with our training from PCCE and how we are working up to our own celebration of learning where we will invite parents and community members to reflect and rejoice over the learning students have undertaken.
- Students were honored by their guests' investment and interest, encouraging them to continue growing through their learning in God's story.
- We made a work plan for the next three years to keep us focused.

Bragg Creek: Leadership cohort: Flourishing Together, A Christian Vision for Students, Educators and Schools.

- Based on Psalm 115: 14; May God cause you and your children to flourish.
- John 10:10b: I have come that they may have life and have it to the full (abundantly).

Read from booklet

Nova Scotia: Christian Schools Canada leadership conference: Journeying with Hope

Isaiah 40:31; Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings of eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

- It was to inspire and equip us to navigate the complexities of education with a steadfast focus on Christ.
- We were invited to deepen our understanding of our
 - **call** into Christian education,
 - feel **connected** to the families, teams, and staff and
 - remain passionately **committed** to the mission of Christian Education.
- How do we lead amidst deep difference? How might our schools embody both: • Counter-cultural commitments • Counter-cultural hospitality