

Initial Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 28, 2023
Boardroom and Microsoft Teams

- Trustees: Ralf Mesenbrink (Chair), Katherine Hauser (Vice Chair), Jen Edwards, Irene Hanenberg, Martha MacNeil, Robin Ross, Lynn Topping, Laurie Whyte, Brooke Hartley (Student Trustee), Paige Knight (Student Trustee)
- Absent: Luke Weiler
- Administration: Director of Education Sovran, Executive Superintendent of School Services McDonald, Executive Superintendent of Business Services Regier, Superintendent of People, Leadership and Culture Pyke, Superintendents of Education Blair, Donaldson, Hamilton, Heaslip, Taha, and Zen, Human Rights and Equity Advisor Ralph, Communications and Public Relations Manager Loney, Manager - Trustee Secretariat Vorkapic

The Initial Board meeting of the Upper Grand District School Board was held virtually and in person on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, in the Board Room at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, starting at 7:00 p.m.

1. Meeting Called to Order

Director of Education Sovran presided and called the meeting to order.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Trustee Edwards recognized that the Board is meeting on the ancestral, treaty and title lands of two Anishinaabek Ojibwe Nations: the Michi Saagig of the Credit and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

Equity and Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Commitment Statement

Student Trustee Brooke Hartley highlighted the Board’s commitment to equity and anti-racism/anti-oppression.

3. Approval of the Agenda

RESOLUTION #23-240:

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil
Seconded by: Trustee Hauser

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the agenda of November 28, 2023 meeting, for the election of the Chair.

Carried

4. Election of Chair of the Board

As stated in Section 4.1.3 of the By-Law No. 1, Chief Executive Officer, Director of Education Sovran named Manager - Trustee Secretariat Vorkapic and Administrative Assistant to the Board Zakaria as the two scrutineers who will collect and tabulate the voting ballots for the election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Board.

The Board proceeded to the election of Chair of the Board for the period November 28, 2023, until the next Organizational meeting or a successor is elected, in accordance with the Board’s By-law No. 1.

Nominations

Trustee Ross, seconded by Trustee MacNeil, nominated Trustee Mesenbrink as Chair of the Board.

Trustee Mesenbrink agreed to stand as Chair of the Board.

RESOLUTION #22-241:

Moved by: Trustee Ross
Seconded by: Trustee MacNeil

THAT the Upper Grand DSB close nominations for Chair of the Board and Trustee Mesenbrink as the sole trustee nominated, Trustee Mesenbrink be named Chair of the Board.

Carried

Trustee Mesenbrink took the Chair and presided for the remainder of the meeting.

5. Address – Chair of the Board

Trustee Mesenbrink provided his Inaugural Address, a copy of which is attached to the minutes.

6. Election of Vice Chair of the Board

The Board proceeded to the election of the Vice Chair of the Board for the period November 28, 2023, until the next Organizational meeting or a successor is elected, in accordance with the Board's By-law No. 1.

Nominations

Trustee MacNeil, seconded by Trustee Edwards, nominated Trustee Hauser as Chair of the Board.

Trustee Hauser agreed to stand as Vice Chair of the Board.

RESOLUTION #23-242:

Moved by: Trustee Topping
Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the nominations for Vice-Chair of the Board be closed.

Carried

With nominations closed and Trustee Hauser as the sole trustee nominated, Trustee Hauser was declared Vice Chair of the Board for the next year.

7. Approval of Remaining Agenda

RESOLUTION #23-243:

Moved by: Trustee Hauser
Seconded by: Trustee Edwards

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approved the remainder of the agenda of the November 28, 2023 meeting, as printed.

Carried

8. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

9. Signing Authority

RESOLUTION #23-244:

Moved by: Trustee Whyte

Seconded by: Trustee MacNeil

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves:

- a) THAT the signing officers for financial transactions be the Chair of the Board and the Director of Education and Secretary-Treasurer.
- b) THAT the Chair of the Board, Trustee Mesenbrink, and the Director of Education and Secretary-Treasurer, Peter Sovran, be named as the cheque-signing authorities of the Board for the period November 29, 2023 for a one year term or until their successors are selected, and that they be authorized to sign the required banking forms, including the authority to make use of a mechanical facsimile of their signatures.
- c) THAT the Royal Bank of Canada be authorized and directed to pay any and all cheques against the account of the Board which may be presented for payment bearing the facsimile signature impressed thereon by mechanical means, of the Chair of the Board and the Director of Education, as Secretary-Treasurer of the Board, to all intents and purposes as though such cheques had been signed in their own handwriting and duly issued by such signing officers with the authority on behalf of the Board. It is also agreed that, in consideration of the Bank's paying or negotiating cheques issued on behalf of the Board and bearing the mechanically imprinted facsimile signature of the Chair of the Board and the Director or Education, as Secretary-Treasurer of the Board, the Board will and hereby does undertake to hold the Bank harmless from, and indemnified against, all losses, costs, damages and expenses arising out of the payment or the negotiation or any cheque on which the facsimile signature has been wrongfully affixed.

Carried

10. Confirmation of Minutes of the Board**10.1 November 14, 2023**RESOLUTION #23-245:

Moved by: Trustee Hauser

Seconded by: Trustee Topping

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the minutes of the November 14, 2023 meeting of the board, as printed.

Carried

11. Student and Staff Recognition

Director of Education Sovran provided some highlights and good news items that recognizes Upper Grand DSB students and staff that took place across Upper Grand DSB.

Upper Grand Teacher Wins Prestigious Award

Congratulations to John F. Ross teacher Erin Doupe, who was named the recipient of the Governor General's History Award for Teaching Excellence. The award recognizes teachers who strive for excellence in teaching Canadian history. Erin recently attended a ceremony in Ottawa where she received her award and was recognized by the Members of Parliament. Erin led her high school students through a local history project called The Story of a Soldier, which centred on the experiences of Guelph's soldiers and their families during the First World War. The students worked closely with attestation records, diaries, historical newspapers, and secondary sources which they used to craft a short biography of a soldier. The students then mailed their stories to the soldiers' last known address. The project took over five years to complete, and over 200 students were part of the undertaking to document and share the lives of Guelph's World War I deceased. More about Erin Doupe's work is on the board website.

Upper Grand DSB Teacher Wins Silver at World Judo Competition

Centennial CVI teacher Amanda McAlpine recently competed in the Veterans World Championships in Abu Dhabi. Amanda is an award-winning Judo competitor and most recently took home a silver medal from the Veterans World Championships. When not teaching, training, or competing, Amanda runs the STRONG program through Upper

Grand DSB Continuing Education. This program is designed to support students using a holistic approach that encourages physical, emotional, and intellectual development with a focus on well-being and personal development.

Centre Wellington DHS Student Competes in World Ringette Championships

Congratulations to Emma M. from Centre Wellington DHS who competed at the World Ringette Championship in late October. She competed with team Canada and participated and played with passion and fervor, resulting in every game being very close. Emma said that the experience competing at such a high, competitive and fast level was “definitely amazing.” Emma’s full experience and the score of the game can be read on the board website.

12. **Delegation(s)** - Nil
13. **Response to Delegation(s)** - Nil
14. **Committee Reports**

14.1 Committee of The Whole – Closed

Pursuant to Section 207(2) of the *Education Act* a meeting of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole, may be closed to the public when the subject-matter under consideration involves matters set out in 207(2)(a)-(e) of the *Education Act*.

Trustee Hauser presented the Committee of the Whole (Closed Session) report held on November 28, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 6:07PM and was held in closed session as per Section 207 (2) of the Education Act. All board members were present, with regrets sent from Trustee Weiler, and there were no declarations of conflict of interest.

RESOLUTION #23-246:

Moved by: Trustee Topping
Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the business of the Committee of the Whole - Closed Session of November 28, 2023.

Carried

14.2 Standing Committees

Trustee Hauser took the Chair for the consideration of the next agenda item.

a) Governance Committee – November 7, 2023

The Governance Committee held a hybrid meeting on November 7, 2023 and Chair Weiler presided the meeting. All members were present with regrets sent from Trustee Ross. There were no conflicts of interest declared. Trustee Weiler presented the committee recommendations which referenced election practices, amending By-law

No.1 regarding the annual organizational meeting, committee assignments and election of standing committee chairs, and the term of office. An ad hoc committee was suggested to review the current delegation process.

RESOLUTION #23-247:

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil

Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the Governance Committee report of November 7, 2023, including the following recommendations:

1. THAT the Upper Grand District School Board endorse the proposal being advanced by Councilor O'Rourke regarding elections.
2. a) THAT the Upper Grand District School Board amend By-law No. 1 by replacing the requirement to hold the annual meeting during the first full week of December with the meeting on or after the anniversary of the term of office to read as follows:

4.1.2 Annual Organizational Meetings

The Annual Organizational Meetings of the Board for the second, third and fourth years of a Board's term of office shall be held **at the first board meeting on or after the anniversary date of the date the term of office began** ~~during the first full week in each succeeding December~~ at the Board's Head Office, unless the Board otherwise directs and notice to Members, Student Trustees and the public has been given.

At such meeting at the appointed time the Director of Education shall call the meeting to order.

b)

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board amend By-law No. 1 by replacing the requirements to complete committee assignments and election of chairs during the first full week of December and during the Annual Organizational meeting to read as follows:

4.1.6 Committee Assignments and Election of Standing Committee Chairs

In an Inaugural year the election for the Standing Committee Chairs (Section 4.8) shall occur **at a board meeting subsequent to the initial board meeting** ~~an Organizational meeting held during the first full week in each succeeding December~~ at the Board's Head Office, unless the Board otherwise Upper Grand District School Board, BY-LAW NO.1 June 2023 Page 7 of 29 directs and notice to Members, Student Trustees and the public has been given notice.

For the second, third and fourth years of a Board's term of office the election of Standing Committee Chairs shall occur **at a board meeting subsequent to the initial board meeting** ~~during the Annual Organizational Meeting following the election of Chair and Vice-Chair.~~

Prior to the **Initial Organizational Meeting**, Trustees may be asked to identify their committee assignment preferences. Based upon the Trustee preferences and balancing workload and interests, a proposed roster of committee assignments shall be presented to the Board for approval.

Once the roster of committee assignments has been approved, the election of Standing Committee Chairs shall be conducted.

Standing Committees may, at their discretion, recommend the election of a Vice-Chair of the Committee, at a subsequent Board meeting.

In the event of the Standing Committee Chair becoming vacant for any reason, a new Chair shall be elected in the same manner as before provided.

c)

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board amend By-law No. 1 by including members of standing committees to the term of office to read as follows:

4.1.7 Term of Office

The term of office for all Chair, Vice-Chair, **Members** and Standing Committee

Chairs shall be for one (1) year, or until their successors are elected. There shall be no restrictions as to how many consecutive terms an individual Member may serve as an Elected Board Officer.

3. THAT the Upper Grand District School Board strike an Ad Hoc Committee to review the delegation process, research methods of obtaining input from the public, make recommendations on process and report back to the Governance Committee.

Carried

Trustee Mesenbrink returned to the Chair.

Trustee Mesenbrink added as part of the approval of the Governance Committee reports, direction to create an Ad Hoc Committee was given. This Ad Hoc Committee will review the delegation process, research methods of obtaining input from the public, and make recommendations on the process and report back to the Governance Committee.

Trustee Mesenbrink asked if there were any nominations or volunteers for the Ad Hoc Committee for delegations.

Trustees MacNeil, Topping, and Hauser volunteered.

RESOLUTION #23-248:

Moved by: Trustee Whyte

Seconded by: Trustee Topping

THAT nominations for the Ad hoc Committee be closed.

Carried

RESOLUTION #23-249:

Moved by: Trustee Whyte

Seconded by: Trustee Edwards

THAT the Upper Grand DSB appoints Trustees MacNeil, Topping, and Hauser to the Ad Hoc Committee for delegations.

Carried

Trustee Mesenbrink asked if there were any nominations or volunteers for the role of Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee for delegations.

Trustee MacNeil volunteered.

RESOLUTION #23-250:

Moved by: Trustee Topping
Seconded by: Trustee Edwards

THAT nominations for the Ad Hoc Committee be closed.

Carried

RESOLUTION #23-251:

Moved by: Trustee Topping
Seconded by: Trustee Hauser

THAT the Upper Grand DSB appoints Trustee MacNeil to Chair the Ad hoc Committee for delegations.

Carried

b) Policy and Priorities Committee – November 7, 2023

The Policy and Priorities Committee held a hybrid meeting on November 7, 2023. Acting Chair MacNeil presided the meeting and all members were present with regrets sent from Trustee Ross. There were no conflicts of interest declared.

RESOLUTION #23-252:

Moved by: Trustee Whyte
Seconded by: Trustee Topping

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the Policy and Priorities Committee report of November 7, 2023, including the following recommendations:

1. THAT the Upper Grand District School Board approve the Policy Review Plan for Policy 102 – School Generated Funds;

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board approve the recategorization of Policy 102 as Policy 709 – School Generated Funds; and

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board release for public consultation Policy 709 – School Generated Funds.

2. THAT the Upper Grand District School Board receive Policy 216 – Communications; and

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board release for public consultation Policy 216 – Communications.

3. THAT the Upper Grand District School Board receive Policy 322 – Safe Operation of Schools and Board Sites; and

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board release for public consultation Policy 322 – Safe Operation of Schools and Board Sites.

4. THAT the Upper Grand District School Board receive Policy 520 – Continuity of Learning; and

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board release for public consultation Policy 520 – Continuity of Learning.

Carried

Trustee Hauser took the Chair for the consideration of the next agenda item.

c) Audit Committee – November 21, 2023

The Audit Committee held a hybrid meeting on November 21, 2023. Chair Mesenbrink presided the meeting and all members were in attendance. The Upper Grand DSB 2022-23 Draft Financial Statements and the Upper Grand Trust Draft Financial Statements were presented for consideration. KPMG presented the Audit Findings Report for the year ended August 31, 2023 for consideration.

RESOLUTION #23-253:

Moved by: Trustee Mesenbrink

Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the Audit Committee report of November 21, 2023, including the following recommendations:

THAT the Upper Grand DSB 2022-2023 Draft Financial Statements be approved.

THAT the Upper Grand DSB Trust 2022-2023 Draft Financial Statements be approved.

Carried

Trustee Mesenbrink returned to the Chair.

d) Finance and Facilities Committee – November 21, 2023

The Finance and Facilities Committee held a hybrid meeting on November 21, 2023. Chair Edwards presided the meeting and there were no conflicts of interest declared. A proposal was presented for renaming of the Island Lake Outdoor Education Centre, and discussions took place regarding updated calculations for Trustee Honoraria, and the 2022-23 Trustee Expense Report. A Capital Projects Update was shared, and the Finance and Facilities Committee was notified that the 2023-24 Budget and Deficit Reduction Plan was officially approved by the Ministry.

RESOLUTION #23-254:

Moved by: Trustee Whyte

Seconded by: Trustee Hauser

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the Finance and Facilities Committee report of November 21, 2023, including the following recommendations:

THAT the Island Lake Outdoor Education Centre be renamed: and

THAT the Finance and Facilities Committee establish a committee including the First Nations Métis Indigenous Education Council to establish a new name for the Island Lake Outdoor Education Centre to reflect the Indigenous Education and Indigenous ways of doing and knowing that are the central focus of this centre.

Carried

14.3 Advisory Committees**a) Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) – October 30, 2023**

The Parent Involvement Committee held a hybrid meeting on October 30, 2023. Trustee MacNeil presented the Parent Involvement Committee report on behalf of Co-Chairs Gillian Prieur and Barb White. Items highlighted were: a Board/Ministry Report where information was shared regarding various items for school councils; a Student Census Report; Special Education and IEP processes and supports in the Upper Grand DSB; discussion on executive vacancies on the committee; and how to provide input for policy public consultations.

RESOLUTION #23-255:

Moved by: Trustee Edwards

Seconded by: Trustee Topping

THAT the Upper Grand DSB receives the Parent Involvement Committee report of October 30, 2023.

Carried

b) Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) – November 8, 2023

The Special Education Advisory Committee held a hybrid meeting on November 8th. Chair Whyte presided the meeting and highlighted the following key items: new therapeutics groups at Upper Gran DSB that are run by Social Workers and Mental Health Psychologists; Information on Mental Health modules provided by the Ministry of Education for Grades 7 and 8 Health and Physical education curriculum; an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion presentation to update on the culturally relevant and responsive speech language pathology services and available resources for families; and a presentation on the Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECP) and their structures.

RESOLUTION #23-256:

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil

Seconded by: Trustee Topping

THAT the Upper Grand DSB receives the Special Education Advisory Committee report of November 8, 2023.

Carried

14.4 External Appointment**(a) Ontario Public School Boards' Association**

Trustee MacNeil presented the OPSBA report. The Waterloo Region DSB hosted the members of the Central West and Western regions for the annual joint meeting in Kitchener on November 4th and topics of discussion included the draft Legal Defense Fund Policy, preliminary Grants for Student Needs discussions, and updates from staff and the various working groups. Professional development was provided by Wayne Joudrie from the Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) on the subject of Board self-assessments. The following important dates were highlighted: the Central West Regional Meeting scheduled for Saturday, January 13th, 2024 has been cancelled, and on January

25th-26th, 2024 the Public Education Symposium will be at the Sheraton Centre in Toronto. The OPSBA Leaders Academy workshops have concluded, and links to past sessions will be available from OPSBA. A more information will be shared at the December Board meeting regarding the Board of Directors Meeting that took place on November 27th, 2023.

RESOLUTION #23-257:

Moved by: Trustee Whyte

Seconded by: Trustee Edwards

THAT the Upper Grand DSB receives the OPSBA Report of November 28, 2023.

Carried

14.5 Student Trustees

a) Student Trustees and Student Senate Report – October 17, 2023

Student Trustees Paige Knight and Brooke Hartley presented the Student Trustees and Student Senate report and highlights from the October 17th meeting were shared. Director Sovran provided the EQAO results, and how the Student Senate can give support to those affected by the conflict in the Middle East. Mental Health and Addictions Lead Jenny Marino spoke about her educational background, presented the Mental Health Moment on grounding, shared a Menti slideshow, and further discussion took place on available mental health supports. Policy 317 – Student Fees was presented by Executive Superintendent McDonald, and discussion about the celebration of Diwali took place. Senators were asked to provide feedback on several policies that are being released for public consultation. The next Student Senate meeting will take place on November 28, 2023.

RESOLUTION #23-258:

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil

Seconded by: Trustee Topping

THAT the Upper Grand DSB receives the Student Trustees and Student Senate report of October 17, 2023.

Carried

15. Report from Director

Director Sovran acknowledged Student Trustee Paige Knight who was wearing an Upper Grand DSB T-shirt with the “Let’s Go” insignia. The first quarter of the 2023-24 school year closed on November 15th and the “Let’s Go” is an acronym for the board’s actions towards realizing Vision 2026 and all aspects of the MYP. He shared the “GO” represents the goals and the key outcomes that Upper Grand schools and service departments have been working hard on throughout the first quarter and expressed gratitude to all staff, students, and student leaders for leaning in together to realize Vision 2026.

16. Other Business - Nil**17. Correspondence – Nil****18. Information Items - Nil****19. Adjournment****RESOLUTION #23-259:**

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil

Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the Upper Grand DSB adjourns at 8:07 p.m.

Carried

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

Address – Chair of the Board

I'll keep my remarks brief.

I'd like to thank my trustee colleagues for their support and confidence in both me and our ability bring our voices together and make the best decisions for the system.

Before the meeting, I took a quick look at what I said a year ago – I said that we have some big tasks ahead of us. For me, in retrospect, the biggest task was unspoken. That was my own learning and growth, learning not just about procedural bylaws and formal meeting procedures and the roles and responsibilities of the trustee and chair role, but learning something about each of you, my colleagues. I hope I have been able to turn this into an opportunity, an opportunity to best ensure all our strengths and interests, community connections and lived experiences are brought to the table to allow us to make the best decision possible.

We have put many of those tasks I listed a year ago into operation, where they have, in my mind, become opportunities, and not tasks.

A few examples:

Through last June's budget decisions, we have created opportunities for the system to address learning gaps among our youngest students, not only those that are a result of our disruptions due to COVID, but all gaps.

As a system, we now have a Human Rights and Equity Advisor and have increased the opportunities to continue our system's work towards the Equity Pillar of our Multi Year Plan.

And most importantly, we have the opportunity to support our staff in the critical work they do with learners every day. I could go on, but I will close by paraphrasing a few thoughts I shared last year.

I think I speak for all my colleagues when I say that we are looking forward to continuing to work with and support every staff member in this organization to the benefit of all our learners.

Thank you again to my colleagues.