



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Monday, September 8, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.

Boardroom, Administration Office

Trustees Present: L. Ross D. Ross
K. Carr C. Ekenna
K. Fallis L. McConnell
J. Murray B. Sieklicki (by phone)

Also Present: D. Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer
M. Gustafson, Superintendent/CEO
S. Gilleshammer, Assistant Superintendent – Student Services
J. Zilkey, Assistant Superintendent – Curriculum and HR
J. McBeth, Executive Assistant

1. COMMITTEE ITEMS

A. REGISTRATION/WELCOME OF WILDFIRE EVACUEE STUDENTS IN BSD

Mr. Zilkey indicated that on Friday, September 5, 2025, the Division had 30 Evacuee students, and as of Monday, September 8, 2025, the Division had 60 Evacuee students. Within the 60 students, 45 students are K-8, and 15 students are high school. He added that there are currently 3 classrooms set up in Riverview School (Grades K-4), 4 classrooms set up in King George (Grades 5-8), and the majority of the high school students are at Vincent Massey and there are a few students at Neelin. The bus transportation has evolved including daily pick ups at Comfort Inn, Travelodge, Clarion Hotel, Victoria Inn and soon to include the Colonial Inn and Days Inn. There have been 8.5 FTE substitute teachers hired to teach the Evacuee students. Mr. Zilkey stated that the Maintenance Department has ensured that Evacuee students have desks and chairs, and Student Services has made sure the Evacuee students have all the resources required.

The Committee asked if the Province was providing any additional support for the Evacuee students, to which Mr. Zilkey indicated the Province has advised all Divisions to keep a record of costs associated to the wildfires. Mr. Labossiere added that all Divisions are to provide quarterly reports with regards to expenses related to Evacuees.

B. APPROVED RESEARCH REQUEST – DR. ELLEN WATSON, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, BRANDON UNIVERSITY, AND WEI-TING LI, VISITING SCHOLAR (BRANDON UNIVERSITY) AND PHD STUDENT (NATIONAL SUN YAT-SEN UNIVERSITY, TAIWAN)

Mr. Gustafson spoke to the Research request which was received on August 7, 2025, from Dr. Ellen Watson, Faculty of Education, Brandon University. The project is titled: Integrating History and Philosophy of Science into Science Education. Ethics approval was provided by the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee.

This research seeks to explore teachers' reasons for focusing, or not focusing, on the nature and history of science in middle years science in Taiwan and Manitoba to discern any contextual and cultural influences on these reasons.

This research does not involve student participation. Staff participation is optional and would involve approximately 4-5 classrooms of middle years science teachers. Principal approval for class participation is also required. Participation would involve approximately 10 hours of classroom observation of each teacher participant. The researcher will take notes on his perceptions on the inclusion of the nature and/or history of science. The notes will be focused on the teachers' pedagogical decisions and not students or their learning. This will not involve any audio or video recording. All participants will remain anonymous.

Students are not considered participants in this study; however, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian of any student who may be included in a classroom observation. Should any student or parent/guardian object to their class being observed, that class will be ineligible to participate.

This request was reviewed by the BSD Research Advisory Committee and has been approved by the Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer.

C. STRONG CITIES NETWORK

At the request of the Committee, Mr. Gustafson reached out for more information regarding the Strong Cities Network and what the Board commitment would entail. Mr. Gustafson indicated he attended a meeting regarding the Federal Program, Strong Cities Network, and learned that they're looking for a one-year commitment with one representative from Senior Administration and one representative from the Board. Over the course of the year, the commitment would entail 10 modules and monthly meetings. Mr. Gustafson suggested that Strong Cities Network be an item on the next joint meeting with the City of Brandon and answered Trustee questions. It was decided that Ms. Gilleshammer and Trustee Linda Ross would be the representatives from the Division.

2. **OPERATIONS INFORMATION**

A. CORRESPONDENCE:

- Mr. Zilkey spoke to the letter from the Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, Brian O'Leary, regarding wildfire evacuees.

- Mr. Labossiere reviewed and highlighted key timelines from the letter from the Acting Director, System Performance and Accountability Division, Education and Early Childhood Learning, Heather Thomson, regarding updates for EIS Collection 2025.
- Ms. Gilleshammer spoke to the letter from Manitoba Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care, regarding Measles.
- Mr. Zilkey reviewed the correspondence from Rhonda Shaw, Executive Director, Learning and Outcomes Branch, regarding Workplace Safety Training for Grade 9 and 10 students.
- Ms. Gilleshammer spoke to the correspondence from Honourable Tracy Schmidt, Minister, Education and Early Childhood Learning, regarding Provincial Code of Conduct. She indicated that Manitoba School Divisions are required to revise or develop policies for the use of the code of conduct in accordance with this policy and directive by January of 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Ekenna