

D14 Branch Presidents Meeting – April 29th, 2020

Guest Greg Ingram – Super Intendant

Introduction to Ministry announcement regarding marks

- After March 13th, we lost the equity that school provides for all students. The Ministry decided to go back to the date when everything was equal and fair across the province, hence why students' marks are based on this date.
- We are to continue to provide feedback and learning for students.
- The Board is focused on what learning looks like when we return and the plan to transition back to schools. They are also looking at how to address obvious gaps in students learning that have been created due to this crisis.
- The Board is held hostage to the decisions of the government. Although opinions are provided, Ministry has final decision on how to proceed.

Q & A

1. Can we get clarification on the Ministry's announcement about new/more computers for students and our commitment to Apple?
 - The Board has already spent a considerable amount on technology and making sure that all students have it. They are not jumping into a contract with Apple. Some families may qualify for more technology based on government requirement but it is assumed it would only be few cases.
2. Is there any more information on whether the school year would extend into the summer?
 - No there has been no talk regarding this. However, they have been discussing online e-learning summer courses that will be offered and the assumption would be that there would be an increased need.
3. Were you aware of the Edsby privacy issue and what is being done about it?
 - Greg was aware but only second-hand as Gloria Tompkins is the SO in charge of technology. Aileen spoke of conversations she's had regarding this issue. They are working on a fix. Greg assured us that it is not being used to track teacher-use and that he trusts that all of our members are supporting kids the best way we can.
4. How are we determining the marks for Careers and Civic students who started the course after March 13th?
 - There is no answer yet, but it is being discussed and there will be direction for those teachers.
5. Looking forward to next year, how are we taking care of teachers' mental health with transition?
 - They are waiting for direction on transition back to schools from the Ministry, whenever it may be. This is a huge concern for the Board as well, not for teachers but also for all staff and students.
6. How is the Board reacting to the Minister's comment about parent's reporting if their teacher is "not doing enough"?

- Make sure to react to messages that come directly from Board and not from the public. They do not have this mind-set and feel that all of us are doing our level-best to support our students.
- 7. It is frustrating to hear the knee-jerk reactions from the Ministry. How is the Board pushing back?
 - We have to build trust with the Ministry through this crisis so that they will listen to our advice and opinions. At the moment, it is hard to deliver something that the Ministry has boxed us in to, but we will have to try and get through this together and support each other. There were discussion about the timing of the message and possibly delaying it going to parents but the Ministry pushed for communication to go out now.
- 8. How is the extra work of delivering paper copies of learning to students without technology being handled?
 - On an individual basis. The primary delivery of learning should be technology.
- 9. Can we reinstate Program Councils in the future?
 - Many members have selected to be in these online groups already that were started at the beginning of the crisis. It is something to consider and something that Kevin is also pursuing.

Final thoughts:

- Senior admin. has reminded P/VP about paring down number of meetings and to limit communication on the weekends and after “school hours”.
- Senior admin, P/VP are sensitive to the fact that our professional judgement has been mostly stripped from us and the professional discomfort many of us may have promoting a student if they do not continue learning. Continue to see it through the lens of equity.
- There will be a decision coming from the Board regarding Grad and Prom soon.