April 21,2022

Exempt Liaison

c/o Mr. Jeff Waselenchuk

<u>Attention: Sandra Sveinunggaard and Ian Crichton</u>

Dear Ms. Sveinunggaard and Mr. Crichton:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank you for your recent presentation on behalf of the Exempt Liaison Committee. We understand that it can be difficult to accurately represent the interests and thoughts of such a diverse group, so the committee's efforts are greatly appreciated.

In your opening remarks, you provided some background and demographic information for our consideration. This is always appreciated as it gives the Board a better sense of the breadth of our exempt staff group. This year, we took particular note of the total exempt staffing numbers over the past several years, as well as the data detailing the age breakdown within our exempt workforce. This information is always helpful, as it can assist with various human resources strategic planning considerations and also help in the identification of priority interests of our employees.

You also took time early in your presentation to identify several positive aspects of the Terms and Conditions of Employment that have been appreciated by exempt staff over the past while. Existing options that you identified included the availability of personal leave days, as well as the opportunity for eligible staff to work an Earned Day Off schedule, both of which provide staff with added flexibility. Going forward, you suggested the Board consider an amendment to how professional development funding is managed, which would better support multi-year education programs that staff are participating in. This is a timely suggestion as this matter was raised at a recent public Board meeting and has been forwarded to administration for further examination; we will now also alert administration of your comments. Lastly, you also encouraged the Board to support the ability of staff to continue with flexible work-from-home arrangements on an ongoing basis post-COVID, at least in the form of a hybrid model. With respect to this, the Board is supportive of further exploration and has asked Administration to examine the feasibility of this in the near future, once the more immediate process of returning staff to the workplace has been completed.

Much of the remainder of your presentation was related to concerns associated with the existing Terms and Conditions of Employment. Suggestions you made for the Board's consideration included, but were not limited to:

- An examination of perceived wage disparities between EPSB pay rates and those paid by other provincial employers;
- Concerns over the limited wage increases over the past number of years;
- A review of the current compensation system for exempt employees;
- Improved communication and clarity to staff regarding compensation practices;
- An examination of perceived inequities between 10-month and 12-month staff; and
- A comprehensive review of the Terms and Conditions of Employment, including the annual salary determination process.

This feedback is helpful, as the Board is always interested in any opportunities that might assist in the retention and recruitment of all our employees, including exempt. For this reason, the information is highly appreciated and has been forwarded to Administration for consideration. I can advise at this time that some of this work has already commenced. For instance, a wage survey has been initiated that will examine the Division's current pay practices versus other relevant employers, and the Terms & Conditions of Employment are expected to be reviewed in their totality within the current calendar year.

In closing, I again thank you for providing the Exempt Liaison Committee's input into the Board's budget planning process, and also wish to extend the Board's appreciation for the support and assistance provided by exempt staff on a daily basis to our students and other staff across the Division, particularly over the past two years that have been so challenging due to the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Trisha Estabrooks
Board Chair