

School District No. 85 Vancouver Island North
District Health and Safety Meeting
Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Meeting was called to order at 10:02 am via Zoom

Committee Attendees:

K. McGhee	-	V.I.N.T.A
J. Voth	-	V.I.N.T.A
J. Welch	-	C.U.P.E
J. Nicholson	-	C.U.P.E
D. Gildersleeve	-	Administration
A. Cunningham	-	Administration
A. Webber	-	Administration
J. Cattermole	-	Recording Secretary

Meeting chaired by: A. Cunningham

MINUTES:

Minutes from November 23, 2021 meeting were circulated, no changes requested. Jody made motion to accept minutes of November 23rd meeting as presented, Jason seconded, all in favour. Minutes accepted.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

- G. Health & Wellness
- H. Monthly meetings
- I. Training

OLD BUSINESS:

Darby suggested that the discussion regarding working along be moved to be included in new business.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Training and Orienting New Workers

Kevin brought forward concern that workers being assigned to a new area are not always receiving appropriate training prior to the work being assigned. Release time is needed for both the teacher and assigned worker/s to give and receive appropriate but should not be scheduled on a Pro-D as teachers are not willing to give up these days to accommodate.

B. Working Alone

Kevin questioned where we are at in regards to implementing the working alone app. Darby indicated that the start-up has been taking a bit longer than expected to get going and we are still working on having it fully in place. Devices are being purchased to provide to those not willing to use their personal device to access the app and the maintenance staff has been doing trials to find what check in interval will work best.

C. Walkthroughs

Concern was brought up regarding walkthroughs continuing to be done outside of working hours even though WorkSafe mandates that they are to be done while school is in session so that "normal" working conditions can be observed. We had discussed at a previous district health & safety meeting the possibility of requesting sub coverage to allow for staff release time to complete inspections within operating hours, to date this has not happened. Kevin would like Darby to request that senior administrative staff allow replacement coverage to provide release time for teachers/site administrators to perform bi-annual walkthroughs during working hours.

D. Critical Incident Team Communication

VINTA had concern regarding a recent incident that took place at one of the schools that brought to light some communication issues among the site based critical incident team and their ability to communicate during an emergency. Kevin asked if there was some way to provide an effective form of communication, whether district cell phones or radios. Radios would provide a short range solution but there are issues with dead zones when used at any distance. Anna questioned whether an emergency response phone tree would be effective and could be activated in these situations. Darby suggested that if the incident moves off of the school property that 9-1-1 be contacted to assist as an additional support. Kevin questioned whether a policy needs to be put in place to deal with future incidents. Jason suggested that the site based teams need to convene and make a response plan as well. The committee requested that other districts be contacted to see what plans they have in place for similar situations, Darby will do this. Anna will ask senior administrative staff to see if there is a policy or procedure in place within the district that needs to be shared with administrators and staff.

E. Chemical Storage

Kevin indicated that he would cover items E & F in the same discussion. A couple of schools have brought forth concerns regarding proper storage of chemicals, the inability to hear PA announcements in all areas of the school as well as other maintenance and housekeeping items that have been on the site based meeting minutes for some time now. Kevin would like to request that the items be brought to the maintenance staff attention to ensure that they are dealt with in a timely manner.

G. Workplace Health and Wellness

At recent BCTF meetings the topic of staff health and wellness has been at the forefront of topics of discussion. Locally it is evident that everyone from administration down is getting burnt out and stressed caused in large part due to shortage of staffing. Kevin questioned what the district committee can do to help attract staff to the district in order to keep current workers from burning out and going on leave. Jason indicated that the problem has been getting worse in recent years and is leading to more incidences of staff making mistakes both big and small. He requests that the district committee provide compassion to staff dealing with these issues and keep pushing for additional training and supports as well as trying to assist in finding solutions to the problems we are facing in the workplace. Alison indicated that current workplace demands are not sustainable and questioned where the line will be drawn as to when things become too much. Darby suggested that in relation to agenda item I that maybe mental health could be the topic of the district health and safety training for this year. It was suggested that if this training were to happen that there needs to be actual solutions offered and not just suggestions of how to change ways of thinking. The district health and safety committee makes a motion to ask that senior leadership meets to come up with solutions that are “out of the box” to find solutions to improve conditions across the board. Anna moves, Kevin seconded, Jody abstained.

H. Monthly Meetings

Kevin questioned whether all sites were holding their monthly meetings like they are supposed to as there are not minutes for all worksites included in the package. Jennifer reported that an email was sent to administrators prior to this meeting requesting all health and safety items be sent so they could be included in the agenda package. Most worksites have submitted at least some meeting minutes but there are a couple that have not sent anything in quite some time. Darby will send a reminder to site administrators to hold regular meetings and submit the minutes as required.

I. Training

Darby asked if the committee would like mental health covered as the training topic for the year. Kevin will ask the VINTA members if this is something they would like at their next meeting. The committee would like a list of possible topics put together for review so we can ensure that the topics will be relevant. Jason suggested that people may be looking for strategies that can be implemented in the “here and now” to make things better as well as offer structures and supports more than self-care. Jonathan suggested that offering information regarding services and supports regarding mental health may be more beneficial than offering a workshop. Darby, Jennifer and Jason will investigate possible topics for training and bring the information back to the committee.

REPORTS:

Copies of the following reports were attached to the agenda package for review.

WorkSafe claims update

Workplace Based Health & Safety Committee Reports:

AJES x 6, EVES x 7. FRES x 5, NISS x 5, PHSS x 2, SES x 2

Worksite Inspection Checklists:

AJES x 3, EVES, FRES, RSES, PHSS, SVES, TACAN

Indoor Air Quality Reports:

None

Incident Reports:

EVES x 3, NISS x 2, PHSS, SVES x 3

Joint Health & Safety Committee Evaluation:

None

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, January 17, 2023 10 am – in person and with Zoom option

Meeting Adjourned at 11:20 am