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COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

All Trustees

STAFF:

Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board

ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES (NON VOTING):

Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC), Christine Moulaison, Alternate: Malaka Hendela

Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee (OCEOC), Christine Lanos, Alternates: Brent Smith and Andrew Nordman

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), Elizabeth Kettle, Alternate: Brian Lesage,

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF), Cathy Bailey (Teachers), Kelly Granum (OSSTF – OT), Nancy Akehurst (OSSTF - ESP, PSSU, PSSP, EA, PECCS), Alternate: TBC

Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators Network (OCSSAN), Rupi Bergamin and Steven Spidell
Alternates:

Student Senate (OCSPC or STAC), TBC

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Mark Wylie, Alternate: Rob Kirwan

Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE) Harvey Brown, Alternate: Stacey-Ann Morris

DISTRIBUTION:

All Board Members, Senior Administration

ABOUT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC):

- The Committee of the Whole (Public) is comprised of all members of the Board with the Vice-chair presiding.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

- The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board posts complete standing committee and Special Education Advisory Committee agendas and reports on the website on the Friday, at least ten days prior to the scheduling of the meeting.
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IN CAMERA MEETINGS:

- Under provincial law, "*A meeting of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole board, may be closed to the public when the subject-matter under consideration involves,*
 - (a) the security of the property of the board;*
 - (b) the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian;*
 - (c) the acquisition or disposal of a school site;*
 - (d) decisions in respect of negotiations with employees of the board; or*
 - (e) litigation affecting the board."*

HOW TO APPEAR AS A DELEGATION:

- The following rules apply to members of the public who would like to address the Committee at a public meeting:
 - If registered by the Thursday prior to the meeting, providing a written submission, and a first appearance on the subject, (up to a 4 minute delegation); or
 - If registering prior to the start of the meeting using the sign-up sheet (up to a 2 minute delegation).
- To pre-register your delegation, you must submit a written statement to Amanda Rock on your issue by 4:00 pm on the Thursday prior to the release of the agenda package. Please note, if the Friday prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting is a statutory holiday, then the deadline is 4:00 pm on Wednesday. Your written statement will be included in the agenda package. If you would like to pre-register, please contact Amanda Rock, Committee Coordinator at (613) 596-8211, ext. 8363, or amanda.rock@ocdsb.ca
- At the beginning of each Committee meeting, a maximum of 20 minutes will be allotted for delegations.



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC AGENDA

Tuesday, April 2, 2019, 7:30 pm

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Pages

- | | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 1. | Call to Order - Vice-Chair of the Board | |
| 2. | Approval of Agenda | |
| 3. | Briefing from the Chair of the Board | |
| 4. | Briefing from the Director | |
| 5. | Delegations | |
| 6. | Matters for Action: | |
| 6.1 | Report 19-032 Base Rate Increase for Not-For-Profit Leases for 2019-2020 (M. Carson, ext. 8881) | 1 |
| 7. | Report from Statutory and Other Committees | |
| 7.1 | Special Education Advisory Committee, 06 March 2019 | 3 |
| 8. | Matters for Discussion: | |
| 8.1 | Report 19-031 Learning Support Services Operational Review of the Process for Identification, Needs Assessment and Placement (P. Symmonds ext. 8254) | 15 |
| 8.2 | Report 19-022 Employee Well-Being and Absenteeism (J. McCoy, ext. 8207) | 23 |
| 9. | Information Items: | |
| 9.1 | Report from OPSBA (if required) | |
| 9.2 | New Ministry Initiatives Update (if required) | |
| 9.3 | OSTA Update - Board of Directors, 25 February 2019 | 33 |

10. New Business - Information and Inquiries

11. Adjournment



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)

Report No. 19-032

2 April 2019

Base Rate Increase for Not-For-Profit Leases for 2019-2020

Key Contact: Michael Carson, Chief Financial Officer, 613-596-8211 ext. 8881

PURPOSE:

1. To obtain Board approval of increases to the base rate charges for not-for-profit agencies leasing space in District facilities for the 2019-2020 school year.

CONTEXT:

2. Not-for-profit agencies are charged an annual occupancy fee to reimburse the District for their proportionate share of a site's operating and maintenance costs. These payments were originally determined through a cost accounting exercise of the operating and maintenance costs to supply facilities, prorated over all of the space in OCDSB buildings, rented out to a single class of occupant (childcare centres).

A commonly used escalation tool in the real estate industry regarding occupancy charges is the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI is also referred to as the cost of living index or the inflation rate. It had been the practice of the OCDSB to adjust rates annually in line with CPI increases to keep rates current.

In 2017-2018, the previous government had begun examining the rates charged in schools to various not-for-profit entities (primarily child cares) and there was anticipation that some standardized formula would be adopted province-wide, as a result, rates were not increased for the 2018-2019 year and cost recovery rates would remain at the 2017-2018 rate of \$10.29 per square foot.

When clients were informed of the one-year freeze they were also given notice to expect a larger adjustment to the base rate in the 2019-2020 year to account for increases in costs.

As the Ministry has not yet provided any directive regarding any sort of provincially-mandated rate methodology it is recommended that the District proceed with the an adjustment based on CPI changes to avoid a large adjustment at some point in the future.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. The current CPI increase for Ottawa (September 2017 to August 2018) as reported by Statistics Canada is 3.2%. If applied to the rate approved in 2017, the result is a base rate of \$10.62 for 2019-2020.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

4. Assuming that the amount of overall rental space does not change, the proposed rate increase would result in a small increase in District revenues to partially offset an increase in costs.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

5. Leases issued to not-for-profit agencies state that the District is entitled to rental increases on an annual basis to reflect an increase in the rates payable for utilities and/or services provided to the facility based on CPI. These increases are necessary to keep pace with the CPI to avoid a large reconciliation in the future. Commercial rates in the Ottawa area are in excess of \$20 per square foot compared to the OCDSB proposed base rate of \$10.62 per square foot. The District's lease rate is lower than external market value. Preliminary discussions with not-for-profit agencies have occurred.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

6. Keeping lease costs congruent with increases in utilities and/or services provided to a facility is a key component of a focus on sustainably allocating resources, in particular by enhancing operational practices to effectively and responsibly manage human and financial resources in support of students; enhancing operational practices.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Board approve an increase to the base rate charges to \$10.62 per square foot for non-profit agencies leasing space in District facilities, effective 1 September 2019.

Michael Carson
Chief Financial Officer

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 7:00 pm
Trustees' Committee Room
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

Members: Rob Kirwan (Community Representative), Rob Campbell (Trustee), Lyra Evans (Trustee), Cathy Miedema (Association for Bright Children), Dragos Popa (Association for Bright Children, Alternate), Katie Ralph (Autism Ontario, Ottawa Chapter), Mark Wylie (Down Syndrome Association), Linda Barbetta (Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton), Donna Owen (Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils), Terry Warner (VOICE for deaf and hard of hearing children, Alternate), Susan Cowin (Community Representative), Sonia Nadon-Campbell (Community Representative), Susan Gardner (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation), Connie Allen (Professional Student Services Personnel, Alternate), Kimberly Elmer (Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators' Network)

Staff and Guests: Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Michael Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of Human Resources); Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Amy Hannah (System Principal of Learning Support Services), Christine Kessler (System Principal of Learning Support Services), Nicole Guthrie (Board Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Chair Kirwan called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Terry Warner,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Chair Kirwan requested that items 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 move to item 5.

Ms. Owen requested that item 8.5 become item 5.1.

Moved by Terry Warner,

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

Carried

3. Delegations

There were no delegations.

4. Member Information

Ms. Ralph noted that any questions or concerns members may have regarding the provincial government's changes to the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) could be directed to her or Autism Ontario. She noted that the changes to OAP take effect on 1 April 2019 and that Autism Ontario will be working to help direct families to service providers.

4.1 Presentation from Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton (LDAO-C)

Linda Barbetta and Dr. Maggie Mamen provided the members of SEAC with information on the Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton (LDAO-C).

During the discussion and in response the questions the following points were noted:

- LDAO-C is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting awareness and respect for persons with learning disabilities (LDs). LDAO-C offer programs, supports and resources to help children, youth, adults and families with the challenges of LDs;
- LDAO-C does not have consistent funding and much of the work is done by volunteers;
- The diagnosis of LD is a diagnosis of exclusion, assessments must rule out other reasons why a child is not learning;
- Reasons why a child may not be able to read include:
 - Primary auditory/visual/language problems;
 - Global developmental delay;
 - Neurodevelopmental disorder (e.g., autism, brain injury);
 - Physical or chronic health disorders, internalizing or externalizing disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression);
 - Interrupted schooling, trauma, cultural or linguistic diversity; and
 - Lack of exposure to literacy opportunities;
- A cross-sectoral provincial task force was set up to define LD and develop guidelines for assessment. The task force identified five criteria for diagnosing LD and all five must be met:
 - A history of academic functioning below the level typically expected for individuals of the same chronological age or the need for

- excessive time or support to develop or maintain typical levels of academic functioning;
- Below average academic achievement (at least one standard deviation below the mean) in at least one of reading, writing or mathematics;
- Evidence that the difficulties in reading or writing or mathematics are logically related to deficits in psychological processes;
- At least average abilities essential for thinking and reasoning; and
- Evidence that the difficulties in reading, writing, or mathematics cannot be accounted for primarily by other factors;
- In Canadian schools, there are more children with LD than with all other exceptionalities combined;
- Early interventions by Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Occupational Therapists (OTs) are effective;
- Children with LD have more success with direct teaching;
- Evidence shows that focused intervention in grade one is more effective in the short and long-term than in grades two and above;
- LDAO-C advise that the District continue to provide enhanced support for early identification and intervention in kindergarten to grade four;
- LDAO-C encourage the District to provide the resources to follow up once the students are identified;
- LDAO-C suggest the District invest in professional development to ensure classroom teachers are confident in their abilities to teach children to read; and
- In response to a query from Ms. Miedema regarding Gifted LD, Ms. Mamen noted that the Ontario Psychological Association (OPA) Guidelines for Diagnosis and Assessment of Children, Adolescents, and Adults with Learning Disabilities has a section specifically related to LD and Gifted. She noted that in order for a gifted student to also be identified as LD, one achievement area must be below the standard score. Diagnosis of this type is clinically significant and will help with the programming and remediation for the child.

5. Action/Discussion/Information Items

5.1 Report from Committee of the Whole, Budget

Ms. Owen advised that the Committee of the Whole Budget met on 22 January 2019. The meeting focused on the 2018-2019 Revised Estimates, additional expenditures and the 2019-2020 budget process.

Ms. Owen noted that the District anticipates a 2018-2019 year-end surplus of \$2.8 million with a projected accumulated surplus of \$37 million.

Ms. Owen advised that the District plans to spend an additional \$6.6 million in the 2018-2019 budget year on classroom furniture, additional

emergency Educational Assistants (EAs), improvements to WiFi infrastructure and Chromebooks.

Ms. Owen indicated that staff is concerned about the current government's statements on the need for expenditure changes to reduce the provincial deficit as well as the possible elimination of Local Priorities Funding (LPF) and as a result, the District may need to use reserves in 2019-2020 to mitigate the impact of possible funding cuts.

5.2 SEAC and the 2019-2020 Budget

During the discussion and in response to the questions the following points were noted:

- The past couple of school years have ended with better than expected financial results which enabled the District's early release from Ministry's Multi Year Financial Recovery Plan (MYFRP);
- The District made several adjustments to its budget and now have a total an accumulated surplus of \$37 million;
- Staff expects they will recommend a budget with a small deficit.
- Staff recommend that the Board utilize these reserves on one-time expenditures;
- The proposed changes within the academic staffing budget will be modest in response to an anticipated reduction from the Ministry;
- Suggestions regarding the budget can be discussed through the question and answer phase of the budget process;
- The Ministry plans to release further budget details on 15 March 2019; and
- The memorandum from the province dated 20 February 2019 provided a routine update on special education funding in 2018-19. The District was one of a few school boards that benefited from the change to the Special Education Per-Pupil Amount (SEPPA) due to increased enrollment.

5.3 Report 19-028, Academic Staffing for 2019-2020

Your committee had before it Report 19-028, Academic Staffing for 2019-2020, providing information with respect to the required and discretionary academic staffing levels for the 2019-2020 school year.

During discussion, and in response to questions the following points were noted:

- The collective agreements with the unions set the timelines by which academic staffing must be approved and completed;
- Academic staffing represents approximately 59.6 percent (\$539.9 million) of the annual budget;

- Recommendations for other administrative and support staff will be determined during the budget process in May 2019;
- Mandatory teaching positions are set by either legislation or collective agreement, other positions are subject to Board decision;
- The District consistently budgets and spends more to support special education than the funding envelope provides. In 2018-2019, the District budgeted approximately \$5.9 million or 5.3 percent more than the funding provided through the Grants for Student Needs (GSNs). Staff does not anticipate this pattern changing for the 2019-2020 school year;
- A total of 20.5 FTE positions in special education (elementary and secondary) were funded through LPF and the anticipated end of that funding will require reductions. Where possible recommendations have been made to mitigate the reductions;
- Staff is recommending 2.5 FTE Learning Support Teacher (LST) positions be added to the current elementary complement;
- A 4.76 FTE contingency allocation, approved in the 2018-2019 budget, is being maintained to support the Learning Disability Specialized Integration Program (LD SIP) integration;
- The District currently has approximately 449 FTE staff allocated to special education. Staff have proposed a slight reduction in the 2019-2020 budget to approximately 443 FTE;
- 3.0 FTE Itinerant Social Emotional Learning Teachers (SELTs) were added with LPF. These positions have had a positive impact and staff is recommending that 3.0 FTE positions be added as part of the Learning Support Services (LSS) itinerant behaviour supports for at least one year;
- 5.0 FTE secondary LST positions were created with LPF and staff is recommending the continuation of 2.83 FTE LST;
- In response to a query from Mr. Wylie regarding the impact of retirees on academic staffing, Superintendent McCoy noted that it is difficult to predict the number of retirees annually. Based on the proposed recommendations and the current staffing complement, the District anticipates an overall increase in staffing levels due to enrolment. Through retirement, resignation and leave, staff are confident that any changes can be absorbed;
- In response to query from Ms. Ralph regarding changes to OAP, Superintendent McCoy noted that LSS have proposed the addition of three Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) classes. She noted that if it is determined that additional ASD support is required, the additional classes may be added during the budget process;
- Superintendent Symmonds noted that it is early to have accurate projections for September placements and staff is still trying to assess the impact of the OAP changes. Autism represents a broad spectrum

of student need. Staff will work to determine the best complement of support to ensure students are successful;

- Ms. Allen commented on the projected increases in ASD, LDSIP, Primary Special Needs (PSN) classes and the use of professional staff to support those classes. She queried whether or not the professional staff for those classes are reflected in the budget or are they part of the current complement and tasked with further cases. Superintendent Symmonds noted that senior staff within LSS have discussed the impact and are aware of the demand on professional staff;
- Trustee Lyra Evans expressed the view that the loss of LPF and future government funding reductions have an impact on students with special needs in the regular classroom. She requested that SEAC discuss whether or not integration into the regular classroom is in the best interest of students with special needs;
- Special education is estimated to have a net decrease of 5.5 FTE at the elementary level and a net increase of 4.5 FTE at the secondary level based on proposed changes to specialized program classes;
- In response to a query from Ms. Owen regarding the 7.17 FTE Secondary Program Enhancements noted on folio 35, Superintendent McCoy noted that principals submit requests for program enhancement sections and these allow secondary schools to add additional course options and pathways for students;
- Trustee Lyra Evans expressed the view that an increase in overall enrollment with the status quo compliment of FTE attributed to special education lowers the special education staff to student ratio;
- Footnote seven on folio 45 notes that the Autism Learning Support Consultant (LSC) approved for 2018-19 was subject to funding and will continue to be subject to funding. The position was added after academic staffing was approved in 2018; and
- LSS has recommended the addition of a Learning Disabilities Specialized Integration Program (LDSIP) class based on student need.

5.4 Memo 19-036, 2019-2020 Specialized Program Classes

Your committee had before it Memo 19-036 providing information regarding 2019-2020 projected needs for specialized program classes to inform the Academic Staffing Report and the budget planning process.

During discussion, and in response to questions the following points were noted:

- Staff did not recommend the reduction of the gifted class at Hilson Avenue Public School;
- LSS continue to review emerging needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) class at Woodroffe High School. The secondary staffing included the necessary support model through the utilization of

staff from the central team. The DHH class will continue at Woodroffe HS;

- 4.76 FTE of contingency staffing in LDSIP has been provided to address the unique staffing challenges that result when the student is integrated into the regular classroom;
- The location of the additional LDSIP junior class as identified on folio 53, has yet to be determined. Travel is an issue for the program's location in the far west. Staff could not comment whether there was room at A. Lorne Cassidy ES but noted they are reviewing schools in the west based on the students who currently require the program;
- The memo was prepared before the announcement of changes to OAP; and
- The 2019-2020 specialized program class recommendations are subject to change.

6. Review of Special Education Advisory Committee Report

6.1 25 February 2019

Moved by Linda Barbetta,

That the report from the 25 February 2019 SEAC meeting be received.

Carried

6.2 Review of Long Range Agenda

The long range agenda was provided for information.

Staff agreed to provide members with a memo on the location of specialized program classes for the 10 April 2019 SEAC meeting.

Trustee Campbell requested that the draft strategic plan be added to the long range agenda.

Ms. Ralph was pleased to note the OAP update on the long range agenda. Chair Kirwan noted that the item is a placeholder for future discussions on matters related to OAP.

6.3 Motion/Action Tracking Report, Business Arising

The motion/action tracking report is provided for information.

Ms. Barbetta requested an update on the monitoring data from the LD program.

Superintendent Symmonds noted that Manager Kay had provided an update on the Special Needs Strategy and that the item should be removed.

Ms. Miedema requested that the location of specialized program classes be added as a new item.

7. Department Update

Superintendent Symmonds thanked SEAC for their input at the 25 February 2019 meeting regarding the operational review of LSS.

Superintendent Symmonds noted that there was a discussion on the changes to OAP at the 5 March 2019 Committee of the Whole meeting. LSS was tasked with gathering information that will assist in the determination of the potential impact of the changes.

Superintendent Symmonds noted that April is World Autism Awareness month and the District will be celebrating Autism Awareness Day on 2 April 2019 with a flag raising ceremony. LSS will provide all schools with a flag to encourage participation in the 'Raise the Flag' campaign. LSS will also supply schools with educator tool kits and resources to help raise awareness. The Atrium at 133 Greenbank Road will display information about autism, art portfolios and feature a demonstration of the Ozobot pilot program.

Superintendent Symmonds highlighted that principals will have an opportunity to participate in professional learning specific to Autism and Policy Program Memorandum 140 (PPM-140).

Superintendent Symmonds advised that on 23 April 2019 the District will host keynote speaker, Dr. Jonathon Weiss, at the Parent Information Night from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m at Sir Robert Borden High School. He added that Dr. Weiss will also present to LSS staff on the prevalence and effects of mental health in Autism. Ms. Ralph has agreed to host the SEAC table that evening.

7.1 Special Education Plan (Standards)

a. Equipment

During the discussion and in response to questions the following points were noted:

- The Special Education Funding Guidelines Special Equipment Amount (SEA) was updated by the Ministry in the spring of 2018. The changes affect the requirements for supporting documentation for SEA per pupil amount (PPA) purchases;
- A central Learning Support Consultant (LSC) is responsible for SEA for the District and is reviewing the new guidelines to determine the possible procedural and budget-related impacts of the guidelines;
- The standard will be updated to reflect the new guidelines;
- It is the practice of the District to provide students with the equipment necessary for the student to access the curriculum,

whether they have a SEA designation or not. Itinerant Teachers of Assistive Technology (ITATs) are responsible to ensure that students who require assistive technology have the devices and platforms they need;

- Ms. Owen expressed concern regarding the implementation of the Ministry guidelines and requested an opportunity for the committee to revisit the standard;
- System Principal Hannah noted that the revised SEA guidelines were created by the previous government and that the District is waiting for further details from the current government on best practices for implementation;
- The procedure has been revised to include the new guidelines and the background work has been undertaken to prepare for the change;
- Ms. Owen expressed concern that should the overall amount of SEA be reduced due to more access to the PPA, it could translate into fewer Chromebooks for students. Staff noted that the ratio of SEA devices within schools is dependent on the school and that SEA approved equipment is funded through the Ministry. As it pertains to other devices, these are funded and provided by Business & Learning Technologies;
- SEA funded equipment is available in every school for trial;
- Ms. Owen expressed the view that the SEA process diagram on folio 2 is missing parental input;
- Ms. Miedema queried the number of students identified in the table on folio 4, System Principal Hannah responded that the total number includes new students as well as current students who require updated equipment;
- SEA equipment may or may not transition with the student. In cases where the equipment is specific and complex the equipment will follow the student. In cases where the supports are web based and accessible, the device will be provided to the student at their new school;
- Students typically have their equipment by the end of September;
- Ms. Allen commented that the changes to the guidelines will enable staff to make a recommendation for SEA equipment through the multi-disciplinary team rather than formal testing and will speed up the response to address student need;
- A SEA designation would transition with the student to post-secondary or other school boards; and
- Mr. Warner suggested that the examples of specialized equipment be further expanded to include commonly utilized equipment.

b. Educational and Other Assessments

During the discussion and in response to questions the following points were noted:

- The assessments provided by the District are listed within the standard. Members queried the relevance of the list and whether or not the complete list is required by the Ministry;
- The dates of the EQAO assessments will be updated;
- The next administration of the PISA will be in the Spring of 2021;
- Trustee Campbell commented that the Ministry Standard indicates that the school board's special education plan include information on average wait times. He queried whether or not the section was updated and the data collection process had been completed. Staff agreed to provide further details on wait lists and wait times;
- The standard should further clarify the use of private assessments and explain what is and what is not an accepted assessment;
- Ms. Allan suggested that the words "regulated health professional" be included in the document. She encouraged the associations to reference appropriate and qualified assessments and providers on their websites to ensure parents are informed;
- Staff advised that the statement on folio 8 regarding the quality assurance division is inaccurate and will be struck from the document;
- Ms. Allen commented that professional support staff use their individual professional judgment when conducting assessments. Professional support staff may use tests not on the list and can assess a child without a test, if it is within their clinical capability; and
- The use of the word "difficulty" at the first bullet under Education Assessments on folio 9 is too broad.

8. Committee Reports

8.1 Advisory Committee on Equity

Ms. Campbell Nadon advised there was no report from the Advisory Committee on Equity.

8.2 Parent Involvement Committee

Chair Kirwan noted that the Parent Involvement Committee meeting of 20 February 2019 featured discussions on the recruitment of community

representatives, the OCDSB parent portal and the strategic plan consultations.

8.3 Board

Chair Kirwan advised that the Board established an Ad Hoc Code of Conduct Committee. He expressed the view that the advisory committees should have the ability to provide input.

8.4 Committee of the Whole

Mr. Wylie noted that the Committee of the Whole meeting of 5 March 2018 featured a discussion on the provincial changes to Autism funding and Academic Staffing.

9. New Business

Ms. Owen queried whether or not SEAC should draft a letter to the Minister expressing concern over the recent provincial announcement of changes to OAP.

Chair Kirwan noted that he will discuss the matter further with Ms. Ralph and her colleagues at Autism Ontario. He added that Chair Lynn Scott will prepare a letter to Minister Thompson, Ministry of Education, and Minister MacLeod, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services endorsing the response prepared by the Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) and requesting the Ministry reconsider the changes to OAP.

Chair Kirwan recommended SEAC delay their response until further details are provided through Ms. Ralph and Autism Ontario.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 p.m.

Rob Kirwan, Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)

2 April 2019

Report No. 19-031

Learning Support Services Operational Review of the Process for Identification, Needs Assessment and Placement

Key Contact: Peter Symmonds, Superintendent, Learning Support Services, 613-596-8211 ext. 8254
Amy Hannah, System Principal, Learning Support Services, 613-596-8211 ext. 8713
Stacey Kay, Manager, Learning Support Services, 613-596-8211 ext. 8657

PURPOSE:

1. This report outlines the plan including the scope of work for the Learning Support Services (LSS) Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment, and placement for all exceptionalities and is presented to Committee of the Whole (COW) for discussion purposes.

CONTEXT:

2. In October, 2018, the Board passed a motion for staff to undertake an operational review of specific processes related to supporting students with special education needs and profiles. The motion emerged from COW and Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) discussions identifying the need to improve parent/guardian understanding of the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process, specifically related to identification and placement. Other aspects raised were requests to ensure consistency of practice with respect to use of the IPRC as it relates to placement across schools in the District, as well as provide greater clarity and improved communication of practices regarding assessment of student needs and the tiered approach to intervention.

Recognizing the affective nature of special education programs and services for families and students, it is also important to note the legislated requirements that schools are required to adhere to for all students (e.g., O.Reg. 181/97 The Identification, Placement and Review Committee). In plain terms, these processes have both emotional and legislative elements that impact how stakeholders respond to and understand them.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. On 30 October 2018, the Board passed the following motion:

THAT staff be directed to undertake an operational review of the process for identification, needs assessment (including the use of tiered interventions as a support for all students, and as identification and placement evidence), and placement for all exceptionalities;

THAT a report be provided to the Board no later than February 2019, with a proposed outline and timeline for the operational review, and an update on any changes in practice introduced in the wake of the discussion of this motion; and,

THAT staff produce a series of updates, beginning no later than the end of October 2019, detailing the number of applications and the number of children receiving assessments and placements in all congregated programs, by exceptionality, at both the elementary and secondary levels, and details of waitlists for all congregated programs by geographic zone.

The LSS Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment, and placement for all exceptionalities is an opportunity to further the District's commitment to continued growth and operational improvement. In order to ensure that the operational review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement provides meaningful, relevant feedback that can be translated into future work plans, a clear scope of the work is required. In the context of this work, a "clear scope" means a defined purpose with clear focus for inquiry informed by specific guiding questions. Importantly, however, a clearly defined scope for this operational review does not limit the District's opportunity to explore further areas for improvement in the future.

In order to objectively and efficiently accomplish this review, the District will contract an external consultant to complete this work. In addition to providing expertise in the area of operational practices and processes, an external consultant will be able to advise on effective methodology to best achieve the goals of this operational review. In order for an external consultant to undertake this work effectively, a clearly defined scope is required.

LSS Operational Review Proposed Timelines

4. The following general timelines and actions are anticipated for the LSS Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement:

Dates	Actions
13 February 2019 - Cancelled 25 February 2019	SEAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to define the deliverables expected upon completion of the review; and to provide input regarding the goals and scope of work related to the process of identification, needs assessment, and placement for all exceptionalities
2 April 2019	COW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to discuss the scope of work and plan for the LSS Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement as determined through consultation with SEAC
April to June 2019	Request for Proposal (RFP) Development/Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to develop a request for proposal, which includes the defined scope of work and project mandate; and to review submissions by external consultants and select the successful consultant(s) to complete the work required
Summer 2019	Operational Review Planning Finalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to finalize review methods with the external consultant(s) for the Operational Review
Fall 2019/Winter 2020	Operational Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> external consultant(s) to conduct review provide updates and a report to Senior Staff; and receive and review the information provided by the external consultant(s) updates to SEAC at key review milestones
Winter/Spring 2020	Completion of Operational Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> receive and review the final report presented by the external consultant(s); invite external consultant(s) to present the final report to SEAC; and final report to SEAC and COW (including the final report prepared by the external consultant)

N.B.: An updated timeline will be provided following the selection of the external consultant.

Scope of Work to Inform the LSS Operational Review

5. A critical component to ensuring that the LSS Operational Review provides value to informing the District practice with respect to identification, needs assessment and placement for all exceptionalities is to clearly define and narrow the scope of work associated with each component.

At the re-scheduled SEAC meeting on 25 February 2019, committee members were invited to engage in a structured, collaborative discussion to facilitate the identification of key questions, goals and deliverables to inform the scope of work to be included in the RFP. Through a series of steps, the committee initially identified a broad range of key questions, goals and deliverables and through consensus were able to arrive at priority areas. LSS has synthesized this information for Board consideration in what staff and SEAC would recommend are the key components to form the RFP. While the three areas of focus for the review were addressed individually, the outcome of the discussion did highlight that there are intersections and connections between the processes of identification, needs assessment and placement. In addition, the discussion highlighted that a subtle change in the order of the review areas may better reflect the application of these educational processes. The areas of focus for the Operational Review will therefore be presented in the following order: needs assessment, identification and placement. Finally, the discussion yielded key questions to narrow the review for all components. Potential goals and deliverables were identified in some areas, for others the review should surface recommendations for next steps.

Focus Area: Needs Assessment (including the tiered approach to intervention):

This area of focus generated rich discussion and identified multifaceted work that will impact cross departmental collaboration and work plans (e.g., Curriculum Services, Business and Learning Technologies). Feedback provided through COW and SEAC discussions has highlighted the perception that the tiered approach to intervention is not clearly defined or understood by critical stakeholder groups. Key questions from the SEAC consultation included:

- What processes are used in the OCDSB to learn about individual student needs?
- What are the indicators used District-wide to determine that a student's needs are being met?
- What are the processes (or mechanisms) used within the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) to provide and receive feedback to parents/guardians regarding student needs? and
- What indicators are used to measure the effectiveness of the current supports and processes used in engaging all students and families?

Goals and deliverables of this component of the review that may lead to improved student achievement and well-being include:

- A plan to consolidate and strengthen the skills and strategies of classroom educators related to planning, assessment and instruction and specifically the development of student profiles.

Focus Area: Identification:

The central question that framed the review priority for this process was identified as:

What is the fundamental difference in the understanding of parents and staff regarding the IPRC process?

This directly impacts staff messaging regarding the IPRC and the corresponding understanding of parents/guardians and students. In the absence of a shared understanding of the IPRC process, it is a challenge to ensure consistency in communication and administration of this process to all staff, parents/guardians, and students.

Goals & deliverables of this component of review that may contribute to system improvements include:

- Tools and resources to support improved communication to all stakeholder groups (e.g., staff, parents/guardians, students);
- Improved use and understanding of data and how this may inform practice; and
- Establishing conditions where parents/guardians and students feel confident and capable to make informed decision regarding the IPRC

Focus Area: Placement:

The discussion of this review component reinforced that there are clear intersections between the process of identification and the placement process both in practice and in the legislation that governs this work. The goals and deliverables for this component of the review were felt to directly relate to the key questions identified as priorities and are as follows:

- What information and data is considered to support a placement decision at an IPRC?
- What is the role of parents/guardians in the placement decision?
- What are the tools and resources to support consistency of information as it relates to placement options in the OCDSB?

Establishing Review Methodology

6. When engaging an external consultant to provide services to the District, maintaining student privacy and confidentiality is of the utmost importance. LSS will work collaboratively with Risk and Supply Chain Management to develop the RFP and establish an evaluation process to review proposals and presentations to identify which proposal best meets the expectations of the RFP. Based on

the scope of work defined by the District, external consultants submitting a proposal will detail a methodology to achieve the stated goals.

Concurrent Learning Support Services Work

7. As stated above, the District is committed to ongoing growth and improvement. To that end, significant work will continue concurrent to the operational review activities and will be adjusted as the review progresses. Staff continue to engage school teams in professional learning opportunities, both formal and informal, through existing structures (e.g., multidisciplinary teams, networks, operational meetings). Further, LSS has been engaged with stakeholders to redevelop the Quality Program Indicators (QPI) resource document and are planning a broader release to the system.

Since the discussion at COW on 16 October 2018, staff has leveraged opportunities to address concerns raised related to the identification, needs assessment, and placement processes.

Professional Development to Principals

Through District Principal Operations meetings, key messages have been reviewed with elementary principals and vice principals. Specifically, topics have included:

- Reviewing the current referral process for all exceptionalities;
- Clarifying the full range of supports available for students with the exceptionality of giftedness, including specialized program classes:
 - grade configuration (e.g., primary through secondary);
 - program options (e.g., English vs French Immersion); and
 - requests for CCAT 7 assessment
- Engaging parents/guardians as partners throughout the needs assessment and referral process including careful consideration of parent/guardian input, preferences and requests; and
- Transparent and effective communication practices with parents/guardians related to support options

Professional Development to Learning Support Teachers (LSTs)

Through LST Network meetings and Learning Support Consultant (LSC) coaching, the key messages have been reviewed with all LSTs. In addition, strategies to share this information with the rest of the school team were collaboratively developed (e.g., staff meeting, in school team meetings, staff coaching).

Central Multidisciplinary Staff Focus/Work Group

LSCs, psychology staff, speech language pathologists and social workers, supporting all exceptionalities, participated in two half day sessions to critically evaluate the following aspects of each referral committee:

- composition;

- referral review calendar; and
- process associated with referrals.

Changes to increase transparency, efficiency and consistency across committees were developed through consensus and structured into a two year implementation plan. Further adjustment will be made subject to the findings and recommendations of the LSS Operational Review.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8. Based on previous District reviews of similar scope, costs associated with external consultants are estimated at approximately \$100,000. More precise costs will not be available until the conclusion of the RFP process.

In addition, there will be implications for the work plans impacting the superintendent, manager, system principals and, potentially, LSCs and other LSS staff to support and inform the work of the operational review. This will reduce the available time to engage in other priorities that may emerge.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

9. The Superintendent of LSS has collaborated with the SEAC Chair to consult SEAC, as an advisory committee, in the planning phases of the LSS Operational Review of identification, needs assessment and placement for all exceptionalities. Regular updates will be provided at SEAC meetings as the work of the operational review progresses.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

10. The LSS Operational Review of the process for identification, needs assessment and placement for all exceptionalities is aligned with the OCDSB 2015-2019 Strategic Plan in the areas of Learning (i.e., improve and increase access to the educational pathways for every student) and Engagement (i.e., develop strategies to enhance communication and dialogue with and among staff, students, families).

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

The following questions are provided to support the discussion of this item by the Committee:

- Why is the LSS Operational Review being undertaken?
- How do the inquiry questions inform the fundamental purpose of the LSS Operational Review?
- What are the expected deliverables of this review?

- How does the structured consultation between SEAC and staff add value to this work?
- How might an external consultation with expertise in operational processes inform the operational review?

Peter Symmonds, Superintendent
of Learning Support Services

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)

02 April 2019

Report No. 19-022

Employee Well-being & Absenteeism

Key Contact: Janice McCoy, Superintendent of Human Resources,
613-596-8207

PURPOSE:

1. To provide Committee of the Whole with an update on employee absenteeism due to sick leave, identify contributing factors, reviewing current efforts to promote wellness and responding to identified attendance barriers.

CONTEXT:

2. Increasing employee absenteeism due to sick leave has been a concern for the last several years. This report will provide an update on sick leave usage, as well as identify potential factors that may be contributing to the increase in sick leave usage and long term disability claims. The report will also provide information on efforts that are currently underway and ongoing to address absenteeism, including the District's Attendance Support Program and initiatives to address contributing organizational factors.

Staff and student well-being have been explicitly identified as organizational priorities within the District's current strategic plan. Employee well-being refers to the physical, mental and social aspects of an individual's overall health. Developing effective employer programs to promote employee well-being requires an understanding of how both organizational factors such as workload, work environment, and personal factors, such as lifestyle habits, can impact on employee wellness. The benefits of investing time and resources in initiatives that support and promote employee well-being can include a reduction in absenteeism related to ill-health and/or low morale; enhanced levels of staff productivity and performance; a positive impact on the organization's ability to attract and retain top talent across all employee groups in the District; and, enhancing the learning environment for students. Although personal wellness is

ultimately an individual responsibility, the employer also has a responsibility to ensure that the workplace is not adversely impacting on employees' well-being by providing a physically and psychologically healthy and safe workplace.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. Sick Leave Usage

Although there are a number of reasons for investing time and resources in this area, a key driver has been the increase in sick leave usage among District employees over the last five years. Sick leave usage has increased by approximately 32% over the last five years, to an average of approximately 12 days in 2017-2018, an increase of more than one day from the previous year, or more than 10% year over year.

Average Sick Leave Usage (2013-14 to 2017-18)

YEARS	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Elementary Teachers	8.44	9.22	10.23	11.12	12.03
Secondary Teachers	7.50	8.27	8.79	8.37	9.86
Educational Assistant's	12.20	12.40	13.91	15.76	16.10
Early Childhood Educator's	8.45	10.42	11.48	14.41	15.65
Custodians/Maintenance	12.75	11.11	14.63	14.48	17.45
Others	6.20	6.80	6.63		
Others – Union				8.65	9.43
Others – Non-Union				5.87	5.15
All Employees	8.61	9.16	10.16	10.87	12.00

SBCI Absence Study Report 2013-2014 to 2017-18

The increase in sick leave is a cause of concern for a number of reasons, including the impact on organizational effectiveness and the associated financial costs. The financial costs include the direct salary costs paid to absent employees, as well as the replacement costs for casual replacements given the large number of District staff who need to be replaced when they are absent from work. The latest estimate suggests that the annual financial cost associated with sick leave exceeds \$29 million in direct salary costs, which does not include the significant cost of replacement employees. For 2018-2019, the cost of supply teachers is expected to reach almost \$20 million.

Absenteeism also has a potential adverse impact on the organization's effectiveness. Frequent absences among teachers and other front-line supports is disruptive to the classroom environment and can adversely impact student learning and well-being, and that of other staff in the building.

The OCDSB, like many other districts in the province, has been experiencing increasing difficulty ensuring there are sufficient casual employees available, including occasional teachers, casual Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and casual Educational Assistants (EAs), to replace behind absent employees and the number of unfilled assignments continues to be a problem on a regular basis. The problem is particularly challenging with regard to filling behind absence ECEs and EAs. In order to ensure a class or assignment is covered, principals or vice-principals may provide coverage themselves, taking them away from their own responsibilities. They may also ask other teachers to give up their preparation time, which then must be paid back at a later date or shuffle EA assignments within the school for the day, or use emergency replacements. The difficulty filling behind absent employees has led the District to significantly limit release time for other purposes such as in school and system level professional development. The issue has increased stress on other staff in the schools, and in particular elementary principals and vice-principals, who are required to spend more and more of their time trying to find replacements, or, dealing with the fall-out of not being able to find a replacement through the usual channels.

Human Resources, in consultation with senior staff and school administrators, are continuing to explore strategies to reduce the number of unfilled absences, including on-going recruitment for casual employees, making adjustments to the call-out system, and assigning daily occasional teachers to work every day in a particular school or schools as Designated Occasional Teachers (DOT's). In some cases, more permanent changes to terms and conditions of casual employment may be required to make the work more attractive, and the OCDSB more competitive relative to neighbouring school boards and other employers. These issues will be examined more closely through the bargaining process.

4. Potential Contributing Factors to Absenteeism

While it is difficult to pinpoint with exact certainty the reasons why sick leave has increased so dramatically in the last few years, several contributing factors have been identified as potential reasons by various parties.

The increase in absenteeism at the current rate can, at least in part, be traced to the changes to the sick leave program, introduced in 2012 by the Liberal government as part of the controversial *Putting Students First Act*. Introduced to control costs, the revised sick leave plan, in its original form, more closely resembled the sick leave and short term disability plans available to other public sector employees in Ontario, by reducing the number of sick leave days available annually, removing the ability to accumulate unused days from year to year, and introducing a short-term disability plan to bridge employees with a serious illness to long term disability. The current sick leave program, which has been revised from the original plan introduced in 2012, provides up to 131 days of sick leave (11 days at 100% pay and 120 days at 90%) annually.

In addition to the sick leave plan design, it is equally important to look at workplace factors that might impact employee well-being and contribute to increased sick leave usage. A general increase in mental health related absenteeism has been identified as a major concern among employers generally. One in five Canadians will experience a mental health issue or addiction problem

at some point in their lifetime and mental and behavioural health issues have become the main causes of short and long-term disability leaves from the workplace in Canada. Although specific data isn't available, anecdotal information suggests this pattern is at least consistent with short and long-term leaves in the education sector.

In general, and as noted frequently by trustees, teachers and other education workers are faced with increasingly challenging work, both in terms of its complexity and the expectations. The provincial unions representing school board employees and OCDSB union representatives have identified several workplace factors as having the highest adverse impact on employee wellness, and, therefore, contributing to the increase in sick leave. These include an increase in aggressive behaviours in the classroom; lack of consistency in student discipline; erosion of professional judgment and professional autonomy; and increased workload demands and general expectations on members.

One of the concerns that has received a lot of attention provincially is the increase in aggressive behaviours among students as reported by front-line education workers. A provincial working group was established through the last round of collective bargaining and continues to meet to discuss concerns and identify feasible strategies. At the District level, there is a workplace violence policy and program in place which includes an on-line reporting mechanism for staff to report incidents of aggressive behaviour or violence as defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* as actual physical contact, attempted physical contact or threats of physical contact. Within the OCDSB, there has been an increase in the number of reported incidents involving aggressive behaviours directed at staff. These incidents can certainly impact the well-being of the staff involved and lead to absences either as a result of an injury or stress.

5. Current Strategies

In response to increasing absenteeism, a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to promoting healthy and engaging workplaces is required. With respect to the sick leave plan design, since the plans are part of the terms and conditions of employment set out in the collective agreements and applicable handbooks, any changes would need to occur through the appropriate bargaining process. However, as noted above, addressing issues related to employee absenteeism and wellness issues in general, goes beyond the design of the sick leave plan. A comprehensive approach means having programs in place, such as an attendance support program and disability management program, as well as programs that are proactive and prevention oriented.

The District has an attendance management program in place to identify and support employees with recurring (non-culpable) absences. The Disability Management Program includes early intervention and return to work strategies with some aspects of an employee wellness program. An update on each of these programs, including successes, challenges and opportunities is provided below.

a) Attendance Support Program

The District has had an attendance program in one form or another in place for many years. In the spring of 2016, in response to increasing absenteeism and evidence that more centralized support was needed, a proposal was approved for additional resources to be invested in the area of attendance support. This included hiring a full-time employee within the Human Resources department dedicated to the administration of the Attendance Support Program. The program was relaunched in the fall of 2016, based on experiences and feedback from Human Resources staff, supervisors, federation/union representatives, and employees. In addition, the School Boards' Cooperative Inc. (SBCI), was engaged to conduct a gap analysis of the District's attendance support program against fourteen best practice elements. Overall, the review provided some areas that needed to be addressed, but confirmed that the District's program is sound.

Under the current Attendance Support Program employees who have 11 or more intermittent sick days (i.e. not attributable to a single long-term medical issue) are identified, enrolled in the program and provided with appropriate supports and ongoing monitoring to encourage improved attendance. The program focuses on non-culpable or innocent absenteeism and is designed to be supportive and non-disciplinary in nature.

Between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018, approximately 25% of the District's workforce were absent for 11 days or more on sick leave. Of this number, approximately 90% were referred to, or were already being managed by Disability Management based on medical support. Since 1 September 2018, approximately 360 employees had met the threshold of 11 days of sick leave, and of that number, 33 employees were determined to meet the criteria for enrolment in the Attendance Support Program.

Although there are advantages to assigning the implementation of the program to a single position, including consistency of implementation, it also presents challenges in terms of being able to manage all eligible cases. The most effective attendance support programs rely on individual supervisors/managers to implement the program, at least through the initial stages, that is, through early identification of the pattern of absenteeism; early intervention through an informal support focused conversation that seeks to identify ways in which the employer can support improved attendance, reinforcing the importance of regular attendance, discussing the impact of frequent absenteeism and establishing achievable targets for improving attendance. Later stages, following a period of continued frequent absences, would involve Human Resources support and increasing levels of intervention. This is a longer term goal, which includes building capacity among current supervisors in this area.

In general, there has been relatively positive feedback regarding the program from principals, managers, employees, and the union/federation

representatives. In addition to the challenges associated with the caseload, accessing and manipulating the absence data from the District's Human Resources Information System (HRIS) system remains difficult.

b) Disability & WSIB Management

As part of the District's disability management program, employees who are absent on sick leave for five consecutive days are required to provide a completed medical certificate to support their absence. In 2017-2018, the number of cases being managed through the Disability Management Program continued to climb. Through the budget, two additional positions were provided to the Employee Wellness and Disability Management division beginning 1 September 2017. Early feedback from employees and unions has confirmed that the positions have increased capacity within the division to support absent employees and has had a positive impact in terms of early intervention and return to work for both occupational and non-occupational illness and injury including planning and implementing accommodations. It is well-established that early intervention efforts along with identifying and providing the appropriate accommodations, are critical to promoting early and effective return to work.

Identifying trends, for example, with respect to the reasons employees are off on longer terms leaves, helps to focus preventative strategies and interventions to reduce the frequency and/or duration of these leaves. Mental health and musculoskeletal disorders continue to be leading causes for long term disability. As a result, employee mental health, including identifying organizational factors that may be contributing to mental ill health among employees, remains a priority of the District's wellness programs, as outlined below.

c) Employee Wellness Program

While the attendance support and disability management programs are important early intervention and absence management strategies, an effective employee wellness program should also include health promotion and prevention strategies and strive to mitigate or remove barriers that may impede or adversely impact employees' health. At their most basic, employee wellness programs generally include initiatives to promote positive health outcomes in order to reduce health related absences and increase productivity. The OCDSB has had various initiatives in place to support wellness for a number of years, such as the Employee and Family Assistance Program, which is currently offered through a contract with Morneau Shepell, and the Short-term Emergency Childcare service, operated by Andrew Fleck. Over the years, other initiatives have been introduced, subject to available resources, such as making funds available to schools and departments to support site-based wellness initiatives, arrangements for corporate membership pricing at local gyms and other health related providers, and District-wide health promotion campaigns. More recently, the wellness budget has been used to support Workplace Mental Health Leadership certificate program, for principals and supervisors (see below). The Employee Wellness area on the District's

website also provides information and resources for staff to promote their personal health and well-being.

Supporting employee wellness is a District-wide responsibility that extends beyond Human Resources and Employee Wellness and Disability Management. It is increasingly becoming a lens through which the work of other departments are viewed. Although largely focused on promoting positive mental health for students, the work being undertaken as part of the District's mental health strategy includes strategies for promoting positive mental health for staff. For example, professional learning modules on increasing resiliency in students include content on developing staff resilience as well.

Work is also being undertaken in the area of compassion fatigue, specifically related to staff who work directly with the District's highest needs students, or whose work is related to supporting other staff. Similarly, the support provided following a traumatic event in a school through the Traumatic Events Response Team (TERT) includes supporting students and staff on site and in the moment.

During the 2017-2018 school year, one of the areas of focus for professional learning was on promoting positive student behaviours. This was prioritized in response to qualitative feedback from the unions and principals and vice-principals related to the need for additional supports to promote positive student behaviour and respond appropriately to situations involving escalating and/or aggressive behaviours. As in other districts in the province, the number of aggressive incidents reported within the OCDSB has increased steadily in recent years, particularly in the primary division and specialized program classes. As a result, promoting positive student behaviour, including strategies related to development self-regulation and resiliency and collaborative problem solving strategies, has been the focus of several professional learning opportunities for principals and vice-principals.

Staff is committed to increasing efforts directed at promoting a healthy workplace, fostering employee wellness and mitigating factors identified as having a negative impact on employee health and well-being. These initiatives include the following:

- I. Healthy and Engaging Workplace Committee
A Healthy and Engaging Workplace Committee was established last year for purposes of supporting the District's employee well-being and engagement initiatives. The committee includes representation from all employee groups, and relevant central departments. The inaugural meeting was held on 18 December 2017. The committee's mandate includes identifying ways to promote engaging and health workplaces across the District, making recommendations to Director's Executive Council with regard to specific wellness initiatives and guiding the

implementation of the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace standard.

II. Workplace Mental Health Leadership Certificate Program

As indicated above, training sessions have been made available for principals and managers. To date, over 100 participants have completed the training, and another session is planned for this year. Senior staff is committed to providing the training to all supervisors in the district. Feedback from participants has been very positive, and in particular, the 'observe', 'plan', 'act', 'reflect' model used to help guide their responses to potential signs of mental illness or mental health concerns with an employee, and the importance of early intervention and supports. Additional training is scheduled later this spring. Plans are underway to assess the impact of the training, if any, on how principals, managers and supervisors approach their roles as leaders in dealing with potential mental health issues.

III. Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace Standard (CSAZ1003)

The Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace Standard (the standard), was commissioned by the Mental Health Commission of Canada and launched in January 2013 as a voluntary standard for Canadian workplaces. The standard provides a comprehensive framework for implementation, along with tools and resources to guide organizations in promoting mental health and preventing psychological harm at work. The standard identifies 13 workplace factors that impact psychological health and well-being, such as reward and recognition, work/life balance, workload management, civility and respect and engagement. Implementation of the standard requires employers to examine their workplace against these factors to identify things associated with the work or the workplace that may be adversely impacting on employees' mental health.

6. Ongoing Challenges and Summary

There continues to be a number of challenges to reducing staff absenteeism. For example, recent vacancies within the Employee Wellness and Disability Management division have impacted some wellness initiatives, but recent hiring should allow things to move forward. Other changes, such as reviewing the current sick leave plan design, can only be achieved through collective bargaining. Other challenges may require a more significant shift in our approach to work and the workplace.

In summary, staff believes that promoting a healthy workplace is an organizational imperative that warrants the ongoing investment of time and resources. Employee absenteeism due to sick leave continues to rise year-over-year. As work to curtail the current trend in this area continues, it will be

important to continue to engage collaboratively with representatives from Ottawa Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF), Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) Bytown and other employees to plan, develop and implement programs and initiatives that will support and promote employee engagement and personal well-being, and mitigate to the extent reasonably possible any negative workplace factors.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7. The current budget provides approximately \$35,000 to support initiatives to promote healthy and engaging workplaces, for example, the Mental Health Leadership certification program for principals and managers. Human Resources is in the process of identifying potential resource needs for next year in time for consideration as part of next year's budget.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

8. Staff well-being is explicitly identified as a priority within the District's current strategic plan, and is critical to supporting overall organizational effectiveness.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

9. The following guiding questions are provided to assist with the discussion:
 - 1) How effective are current programs in reducing absenteeism, promoting well-being and engagement, and promoting the District as an employer of choice for purposes of recruiting and retaining talent?
 - 2) What other opportunities are there to enhance current well-being and engagement programs and initiatives?
 - 3) What are the greatest challenges to promoting a healthy and engaging workplace and what will it take to overcome them?

FOR DISCUSSION

Janice McCoy
Superintendent of Human Resources
(ext. 8207)

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

**Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA)
Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**Held on
Monday February 25th, 2019, 5:30 p.m.
Ottawa Student Transportation Authority
1645 Woodroffe Avenue, Ottawa (Nepean) – 1st Floor, Room 100/Teleconference**

REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

President/Chairperson: John Curry

Directors: Camille Williams-Taylor
Lynn Scott
Jeremy Wittet
Lisa Schimmens
Denise Andre
Michael Carson
Donna Blackburn

Absent: None.

General Manager/C.A.O.: Vicky Kyriaco

Other: Joanne Glaser, Cornerstones.

Recording: Jeff Redmond, Controller

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:39 p.m. with John Curry in the Chair.

2. **Acknowledgement of First Nations**

The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the ancestral, traditional and unceded Indigenous territory of the Algonquin Peoples, on whose territory we learn, play and work.

3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None.

4. Approval of Regular Session Agenda

Moved by: Donna Blackburn

Seconded by: Jeremy Wittet

THAT the Regular Session agenda be approved.

Carried

5. Resolve In Camera

Moved by: Lynn Scott

Seconded by: Lisa Schimmens

THAT the committee resolves In Camera.

Carried

Return to Regular Session at 6:21 p.m.

Regular Session Action Items

6. (a) Confirmation of Regular Session Minutes, January 28th, 2019

Moved by: Denise Andre

Seconded by: Jeremy Wittet

THAT the Regular Session minutes of January 28th, 2019 be approved.

Carried

(b) Business Arising from the Regular Session Minutes, January 28th, 2019

None.

7. Policy T13 – Student Discipline

Vicky Kyriaco presented a report updating the student discipline policy. School responsibilities were clarified, including terminology that buses are an extension of the classroom. Clarity was encompassed in the policy statement, referencing the Education Act, that student transportation is a privilege, not a right. Amendments also occurred respecting student behavior and compliance measures. Questions and answers were provided to the Board. After discussion, wording would be amended.

Moved by: Jeremy Wittet

Seconded by: Camille Williams-Taylor

THAT the OSTA Board of Directors defer the policy amendment.

Carried

8. Financial Update

Jeff Redmond presented the December 31, 2018 financial update, including forecast. The current balance sheet is healthy, and at this point there is no need to adjust monthly advances from the member Boards. To date, it is predicted there will be a small deficit of \$525 thousand dollars to year end. The deficit is a result of approval of \$1.1 million expenditure from a driver shortage mitigation plan, which was approved after budget approval. There was a small surplus of \$348 thousand dollars, before the mitigation plan is accounted for. To note, enrollment growth in the small vehicles is trending around 5 to 6%, at the OCDSB which is creating a deficit in this line item. The deficit has been partially offset by savings in both large buses and transit. Vicky Kyriaco expanded on the small vehicle increases, noting added SHSM students and new transportation for youth in care. Further, there is increased demand in new construction area, as well as transit for refugees. Questions and answers were provided to the Board.

Moved by: Lynn Scott

Seconded by: Michael Carson

THAT the OSTA Board of Directors receive the report Unaudited Financial Statements and Forecast for the 4 months ending December 31, 2018, as presented.

Carried

9. Inclement Weather re Consultation

Vicky Kyriaco presented a report respecting a review to the current inclement weather policy. During the January Board meeting, it was requested additional information be provided prior to establishing consultation parameters for a policy review. Data was compiled from 18 other consortia in the province. Of the 18, 10 do not have a temperature threshold although 6 of the 10 consider temperature in their assessment, 3 southern Boards (London, Guelf and York) have

automatic cancellations between -28 to -35, and 5 consortia use an ambient temperature of -38 to -40 due to the fact diesel fuel gels and buses won't start. Based on Ottawa's frostbite warnings from Environment Canada (windchill of -35), services would have to be cancelled an additional 9 days in the past 5 years. For a frostbite advisory (-25 windchill), that number would jump to 47 times. Other factors were reviewed, including medical reports from CHEO, school crossing guards and walking school bus leaders, parental issues, exams, student safety, road conditions etc. Liability was reviewed, along with member board procedures and information channels. The purpose of the report is for the Directors to explore the scope of consultation required, if a temperature threshold should be added to policy. Staff recommend that if a consultation were to proceed, to either automatically cancel transportation with a frostbite warning, or to have no stipulated temperature threshold defined. Questions and answers were provided for the Board. Ms. Kyriaco was thanked for the good research. No further consultation was suggested.

Moved by: Lynn Scott
Seconded by: Michael Carson

THAT the OSTA Board of Directors receive the report Inclement Weather Policy - Review, as presented.

Carried

Regular Session Information Items

10. National Transportation Services Inc. - Recovery

OSTA received notification from National Transportation at the end of January they had lost a number of critical staff required to maintain current service levels and would be calling in replacements from other areas to compensate. It became obvious after a week that their interim plan was not working, and OSTA staff had to improvise routes and implement strategies to maintain service levels, as National continued losing drivers. Many affected students were being left out in the cold and unsupervised much longer than expected. On February 5th, OSTA was advised they would be unable to service a number of routes both currently as well as in the following week. OSTA temporarily cancelled a number of routes due to safety issues, and a plan was put in place shifting routes to different operators as well as putting a number of students on OC Transpo. National was bringing in other drivers and management from other locations. Communications to parents and schools was provided. It is expected that cancelled routes should be restored by March 5th. Questions and answers were provided, and it was noted to closely monitor some of the more vulnerable student populations affected.

11. OSTA Update for January 2019

Vicky Kyriaco reviewed the January update. Questions and answers were provided for the Board.

12. Long Range Agenda

Policy T13 Student Discipline would come forward to the March OSTA meeting.

13. New Business, Regular Session

None.

14. Meeting Schedule

Future Board meeting Dates:

March 25, 2019
April 29, 2019 – Public Meeting
May 27, 2019
June 26, 2019*
August 26, 2019

Nb: - * indicates optional meeting dates, dependant on agenda requirements.

15. Adjournment

Moved by: **Jeremy Wittet**
Seconded by: **Camille Williams-Taylor**

THAT the Regular Session meeting adjourn at 7:25 p.m.

Carried

Signature

Title

Signature

Title