



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Thursday, January 16, 2020, 6:00 pm

Gloucester High School

2060 Ogilvie Road

Ottawa, Ontario

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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
Report No. 20-011

21 January 2019

Supporting Indigenous Learners at the OCDSB

Key Contact: Dorothy Baker, Superintendent of Instruction

PURPOSE:

1. To provide an update with respect to Indigenous Education within the OCDSB for the 2018-2019 school year.

CONTEXT:

2. The OCDSB's vision and work in supporting Indigenous Education is grounded in the Ministry's vision and the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The District's commitment to engaging with and supporting Indigenous students' achievement and well-being is focused on prioritizing their emotional, physical, social, and intellectual development by taking actions in these three key areas:
 - building relationships of trust within the Indigenous community to work together to improve student achievement and well-being;
 - establishing a process so that more students and their families feel comfortable in the self-identification process, providing the capacity to measure progress in closing the achievement gaps; and
 - providing learning opportunities for all students and staff to build knowledge, appreciation and a deeper understanding of Indigenous traditions, cultures, perspectives, and roles in Canadian history.

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board had 1400 self-identified Indigenous students in the 2018-2019 school year. Over the past three years the number of families who have chosen to self-identify as Indigenous within the OCDSB has remained constant. This number is consistent with that of the 2016 Canadian Census wherein the Indigenous population is reported at 2% in Ottawa.

In 2007 the Ministry released the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework. In 2014, the Ministry of Education released the implementation plan for that document, confirming the Ministry's three primary goals:

- Improve student well-being and achievement for Indigenous students;
- Close achievement gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students; and
- Increase public confidence.

Annually, the OCDSB develops a Board Action Plan (attached as Appendix A) and submits it to the Ministry. The following strategies are woven throughout the work of the OCDSB's Indigenous Educational Learning Team to support the Ministry's three primary goals:

- Using data to support student achievement;
- Supporting students;
- Supporting educators; and,
- Engagement and awareness building.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. Improving Well-Being and Achievement for Indigenous Students

The Indigenous Education Learning Team continues to work with students and educators towards a goal of supporting movement along a learning continuum that begins by building awareness, leads to engaged learning, and ultimately to embedding Indigenous pedagogy as part of practice.

In the 2018-2019 school year, the Indigenous Education Learning Team expanded to include an Indigenous Student Success Coordinator (ISSC) serving students and educators K-12. The addition of the ISSC increased the capacity of the team significantly. The Indigenous Student Success Coordinator, together with the Indigenous Student Success and Re-Engagement Coordinator (ISSRC) supported 33 schools (K-12), worked directly with 638 students, facilitated 112 student circles, held 111 parent/guardian meetings, and met with 457 school staff. Additionally, the ISSC and ISSRC provided intensive and ongoing support to students and staff at six OCDSB schools with the high representation of self-identified Indigenous students in our District. During the 2018-2019 school year, the ISSC and ISSRC made referrals to several community agencies and established a waiting list as they continue to attempt to meet the increasing demand for support. This reality reinforced the need to explore options to increase staffing in order to provide greater support for students and educators. Below is a table that shows the comparative data with respect to Indigenous Student Success.

Comparative Data - Indigenous Student Success Impact		
	2018-2019	2017-2018
One-on-one sessions	638	353
Student circles	112	60
Parent/Guardian Meetings	111	77
Met with School Staff	457	191

Self-identified and non-self-identified Indigenous students can be found at every school in the District. Efforts to support Indigenous students and to create a network of peers have resulted in the creation of a youth group, Original Voices, in the 2018-2019 school year. The Indigenous Student Success Coordinator and the Indigenous Student Success and Re-Engagement Coordinator work together with community partners that allow students to meet once a month. Students participate in sharing circles, receive support, build advocacy skills and provide input to the Indigenous Education Learning Team. Students have identified a desire to have opportunities to celebrate who they are; to share their stories; to know someone is listening to them; and to know that there will be action in response to their concerns.

Professional development continues to be a focus for teachers with respect to cultural competency and understanding. In the 2018-2019 school year, the Indigenous Education Learning Team worked together with the Student Success lead to increase teacher knowledge. Members of the Indigenous Education team facilitated learning to Student Teacher (SST) pod meetings three times during the year. The outcomes observed included an increased awareness and understanding of the importance of relationships and building trust with Indigenous students; teachers were far more willing to ask questions and take risks; and teachers were more open to creating safe spaces within their classrooms. The Indigenous Education Learning Team was also involved in increasing knowledge of Indigenous perspectives, history and contemporary issues among central coaches in Program and Learning K-12, educational assistants, and elementary principals. The result of these learning sessions was a variety of outreach from OCDSB staff to facilitate further conversations and professional development within schools.

Supporting the well-being of Indigenous students means allowing them to build their own understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, provide them with self-advocacy skills, and leadership opportunities. In the 2018-2019 school year, 28 Indigenous students from various secondary schools in the District attended Leadership Camp; 150 OCDSB students attended the third annual Indigenous

Youth Symposium, along with 35 educators, 20 community partners offering information at kiosks. The day allowed Indigenous students to connect with other Indigenous students from across the city, learn more about various Indigenous culture, traditions, art, and language (13 workshops), and to come together in celebration. Indigenous students worked in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Learning Team to create and present various workshops within the District. The impact of these opportunities resulted in Indigenous students at various schools engaging in leadership roles within their schools to create education days for their peers.

4. Closing the Gap

The work facilitated by the Indigenous Education Learning Team in supporting Indigenous students' achievement and well-being is foundational to seeing changes in data; specifically in the narrowing of learning gaps. Provincial and District data continues to show a gap in achievement for students who self-identify as Indigenous. In 2018-2019, achievement gaps for students who self-identified as Indigenous narrowed in five of the ten Education, Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments. Over a period of four years, general trends showed decreases in primary reading, writing and math and grade nine academic math. The largest gaps appear in junior mathematics and first year eligible Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT). This data is detailed in Appendix B. When interpreting these trends, it is important to keep the cohort size in mind, noting that with smaller groups of students, fluctuations in performance tends to be more prominent.

In 2018-2019 phase II of the implementation of the English Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit Voices (NBE3U/C/E) course as a compulsory course began. The OCDSB continued to partner with Indigenous elders, knowledge keepers and community partners to create rich, relevant learning opportunities. Thirteen secondary schools requested to be part of this planning to offer the NBE course as the compulsory grade 11 English course for the 2019-2020 school year. Participating schools benefited from the knowledge shared with the OCDSB by Indigenous partners both at the planning stages and at the implementation phase through continued Indigenous cultural competency learning, looking closer into the revised Indigenous Studies curriculum, developing a compilation of resources, and the introduction of a virtual learning environment. Teachers have expressed their gratitude for being able to explore and offer this course to students. One of the successes in developing the course was the ability to provide students with a new perspective that had either been limited or non-existent. In some schools teachers have shared how teaching the course has opened the eyes of teachers to a new world of literature from Indigenous authors. There is a recognition of the voices and perspectives which is important. Students have told teachers throughout the school about the books, the enjoyment, and have motivated those teachers to reach out and borrow copies to read.

In 2018-2019 our Indigenous Instructional Coach continued to work with students and educators at the junior and intermediate level to focus on mathematical

learning through beading. While building mathematical skills, this experience provided an opportunity to bring greater awareness to students and educators about Indigenous ways of knowing, while also building cultural competency through discussions on how to welcome and work with knowledge keepers in our school communities. The instructional coach facilitated connections between community partners and educators to develop and facilitate beading experiences. The community partners led the beading instruction while the instructional coach and teachers focused on, highlighted and reinforced mathematical concepts such as multiplicative thinking, algebraic reasoning, and patterning. This work made a difference for Indigenous students who expressed greater confidence in their mathematical ability. They felt pride by seeing elements of their culture as a central part of their learning and in taking on leadership roles, working directly with and supporting their peers' learning. All students expressed a greater awareness of the application of mathematical thinking in different and authentic settings.

5. Increasing Public Confidence: Engaging with Indigenous Students, Parents, and Community Partners

Prior to 2018-2019 and through the relationships developed by the members of the Indigenous Education Learning Team, Indigenous parents/guardians and community partners had shared a desire to increase Indigenous voices, content, and perspectives while further embedding an accurate portrayal of history in their children's learning experiences. Additionally, students reinforced that they would like to celebrate who they are, know that someone is listening to them, and see themselves reflected through better Indigenous content and more Indigenous perspectives. These voices informed several priorities for the work: the development of the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC); embedding Indigenous perspectives in specific curricular areas; and further engaging with student voice to promote student leadership.

The Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) began meeting in 2018-2019 to establish representation and to begin providing the District with ongoing advice and consultation in Indigenous Education. Initial priorities for this group included engaging with partners, students, families and educators to be part of this advisory group, and establishing relationships that support capacity building in listening and engaging in meaningful communication and shared learning.

In 2018-2019, the OCDSB was informed of the Ontario Ministry of Education's work with the Uqausilirijiit Circle (Inuit Elder's Language Circle). The creation of this circle will allow fluent Inuktitut speakers to be recommended to the Ontario College of Teachers for teaching certification. The mandate will provide opportunities for hiring Inuktitut language teachers in the OCDSB.

6. How do we know we are making a difference

The OCDSB has fostered many positive relationships with Indigenous students, their families and the Indigenous community in Ottawa. It is through these relationships that we have been able to achieve success. The addition of the Indigenous Student Success Coordinator to the Indigenous Education Learning

Team has allowed for significant impact on the number of Indigenous students we are able to offer support. In the 2018-2019 school year, 638 students received support as compared to 353 students in the 2017-2018 school year. In 2018-2019, 112 students circles were facilitated; an increase from 60 held in 2017-2018. Additionally, 457 meetings with school staff were held in 2018-2019; only 191 such meetings were held in the previous school year.

At the Indigenous Youth Symposium last year, students described how the day impacted them, the following comments were noted:

- “It is empowering,”
- “I know that 100 per cent of the people who are here today to hear me and are working towards making a difference,”
- “Here I feel accepted, not alone, and appreciated,”
- “We are building a community and community is important in Ottawa,”
- “I feel safe to be me”

Educators commented:

- “The day reminds me how important Indigenous youth voice is,”
- “The IYS allows for honouring young people, providing the space to celebrate who they are and their rich history,”
- “It’s a chance for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to come together to build relationships,”
- “I wanted to share with you that I listened to many meaningful personal stories, truths and history about Canada today - from being in the glass hallway in front of the map, and connecting with students through some of their creations.

I learned more about some parts of this country today than in my whole life before.”

Outreach from teachers and staff has continued to grow. Staff are asking how they can make changes in the way they teach. They have acknowledged the importance of including Indigenous knowledge, perspectives and history in the classroom.

- “Thank you so much for sending out resources and ideas like this, it makes a huge difference in how, as settler educators, we bring Indigenous knowledge to our students. As I continue to learn and grow, I feel so fortunate to have you by my side to bounce thoughts and ideas off of and to ensure I respectfully and accurately represent Indigenous realities in my classroom;”
- “As an administrator, I will hold my staff accountable, encourage and support them to incorporate aboriginal studies into their curriculum.”

7. Learning and Next Steps

Each experience and initiative resulted in enhanced awareness, capacity building, and movement into greater engagement of Indigenous pedagogy and Indigenous ways of knowing. Progress is being made, and those achievements support the refinement of our goals moving forward. Each experience serves to build understandings and guide next steps in further supporting professional learning for staff while valuing and empowering Indigenous Students. In order to continue

movement along the learning continuum - from awareness to engagement to embedded Indigenous pedagogy, the Indigenous Education Learning Team has continued to engage in and support learning during the 2018-2019 school year. This work supports the Ministry's three primary goals.

Initiatives to ensure that difference is being made in each of these areas have been built into the 2019-2020 Board Action Plan and include:

- Improved Well-being and Achievement for Indigenous Students
- Maintain Indigenous Youth group - accessible in many parts of the District;
- Be intentional in creating equitable opportunities to embed professional learning to build awareness and move into greater engagement in learning;
- Continue and expand Indigenous student leadership opportunities; and Closing Learning Gaps for Indigenous Students
- Further extend Indigenous Mathematics learning opportunities;
- Continue and deepen collaboration with Wabano and Inuuqatigiit-Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families to provide cultural support, and transitions; and
- Implement a Ministry funded Indigenous Grad Coach position; Build Public Confidence
- Continue the development of community partnerships with educators;
- Continue to build relationships between educators and Knowledge Keepers;
- Continue to listen to students, parents/guardians and families;
- Continue to phase the NBE3U/C/E course and offer support and resources necessary in all secondary sites within the District;
- Bring forward a four year strategic plan for Indigenous Education.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8. Funding for Indigenous education at the OCDSB and across Ontario stems from the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Supplement Grant, which has three allocations:
 - Native Language;
 - Native Studies;
 - and Per-Pupil Amount.

The OCDSB qualifies for both the Native Studies and Per-Pupil allocations, but does not currently offer Native Language programming and as such does not receive funds through allocation. Funding is used to offer Native Studies courses in secondary schools, provide resources for schools, support community partnerships (e.g., Urban Aboriginal High School, Inuuqatigiit-Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families, Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, etc.), provide for one system vice principal position and two instructional coach positions, and any other opportunities for students and staff development. For 2018-2019, the grant totals \$2,785,036. Since 2010, there have been many changes to the

funding formula for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education. The Ministry of Education has made it a priority for Indigenous students and their families to self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit in order to allocate funds to support students. Appendix C provides pertinent financial reporting data for Indigenous Education at OCDSB in the 2018-2019 school year.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

9. Building trusting relationships and developing awareness of Indigenous learnings and ways of knowing serve as the catalyst to increasing the achievement and well-being of the Indigenous students in the OCDSB. This belief serves as the driving force of the Indigenous Education Learning Team. The Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) and the Original Voices Youth Circle will allow the OCDSB to hear the voices of Indigenous students, families and community partners. These voices will continue to guide the development of strategies and initiatives designed to support improved well-being and achievement, and equitable outcomes for Indigenous students. Additionally in 2018-2019, the OCDSB has had the opportunity to consult with Indigenous parents and community partners as it embarked on the collection of identity-based data. As part of the commitment to the Indigenous community, the OCDSB held separate sessions to ensure Indigenous voices were heard in the process through both Indigenous student and parent focus groups, and provided information in Inuktitut.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

10. The work presented reports the measurement of progress being made in support of the OCDSB Indigenous population, and can be used to monitor advancement in our strategic objectives. Much of the progress detailed in this report was driven by the priorities set in the 2015-2019 strategic plan and the specific goal to reduce barriers to learning to improve equity of access and opportunity for all students. One of the strategies identified for achieving this goal was to review and ensure effective use of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit funding. The financial investments made in support of Indigenous student achievement and well-being can be found in Appendix C, which indicates that funds were largely spent as intended in the predetermined budget.

Looking ahead, the work in support of Indigenous Education addresses all three pillars of the 2019-2023 strategic plan: building a culture of innovation, a culture of caring, and a culture of social responsibility. A specific goal of the current strategic plan is to remove barriers to equity of access, opportunity and outcomes. This will be achieved by building system capacity in equity and inclusive practice to support education, engagement and reconciliation with historically marginalized groups.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

11. The following questions are provided to support the discussion of this item by the Committee:
- How can we leverage the work that has been done so that more educators are empowered and engaged in Indigenous education?
 - How can we best support the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with regard to Indigenous education in our schools?
 - How can we sustain meaningful relationships with community partners and Indigenous families so that we continue to build capacity for OCDSB staff, thus impacting all students?
 - How can we continue to support our movement as a District, along our learning continuum from awareness to engagement, to implementation?

Dorothy Baker
Superintendent of Instruction

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education
Secretary of the Board

APPENDICES

Appendix A Board Action Plan/Initiatives and Programming

Appendix B Performance Measures

Appendix C Financial Information

Appendix A, Supporting Indigenous Learners at the OCDSB Board Action Plan, Initiatives and Programs

The Board Action Plan on Indigenous Education outlines how the District provides support for identified strategies and actions developed in four priority areas defined by the Ministry using data to:

- Support Student Achievement;
- Supporting Students;
- Supporting Educators; and
- Engagement and Awareness Building.

The 2018-2019 plan provided opportunities for participation in a variety of activities, such as professional development for teachers, student experiences and activities with Indigenous role models, artists, and knowledge keepers, and to engage parents and community members in Indigenous Education. In the 2018-2019 school year, funds in the amount of \$126,240 plus an additional Education Program Other (EPO) grant of \$172,215 were used to support the Board Action Plan on Indigenous Education. Below is a chart that outlines the OCDSB Board Action Plan for 2018-2019.

Board Action Plan on Indigenous Education 2018-2019	
Guiding principles - a) listen to community partners b) support students c) build trust d) respond to the TRC, specifically Calls to Action 10, 12, 62, and 63.	
Using Data to Support Student Achievement - 16% of funds	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • InSTEM program - Gloucester students participated in incorporating Indigenous knowledge and content in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics - 15 students enrolled; 10 credits attained • Mathematics & Beading Inquiry - Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth, students participated in an inquiry to uncover connections between loom beading and mathematics (multiplicative, algebraic thinking and reasoning) - 2 teachers, 1 community members, 68 students • Indigenous Youth Symposium - held one day event to invite Indigenous youth and a friend to participate in learning, celebration of culture and to gather student voice - 150 students, 23 high schools • Indigenous Education Advisory Council - established representation for the Council and met to begin consultation • Wabano Cultural Liaison Worker - provided cultural support and workshops for students • APSIP - 25 students attended the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Information Program 	

Supporting Students - 27% of funds

- **Student Leadership Program** - *Spring* - leadership with Indigenous content and perspectives for Indigenous students - 40 students attended the camp. 12 students were given the opportunity to act as Camp Leaders. Opportunities included: Inuit Games, Stories, Anishinaabemowin, Anishinaabe Teachings, Art Activity, Hoop Dancing, Inuktitut, Dreamcatchers, Teachings of the seasons, smudging, drumming and singing.
- **Mamawii Together** - One day learning opportunity for OCDSB students to learn more about their role in Truth and Reconciliation -20 students from 9 schools, 12 teachers
- **Student led workshops** - OCDSB secondary students made presentations at 3 elementary schools.
- **Indigenous Voices** - paired schools with traditional knowledge keepers and community presenters to create deeper relationships and understanding - 10 schools
- **Arts Workshops** - workshops in schools with Indigenous artists - 5 schools
- **Native Studies support** - funds for resources to supplement Native Studies courses

Supporting Educators - 35% of funds

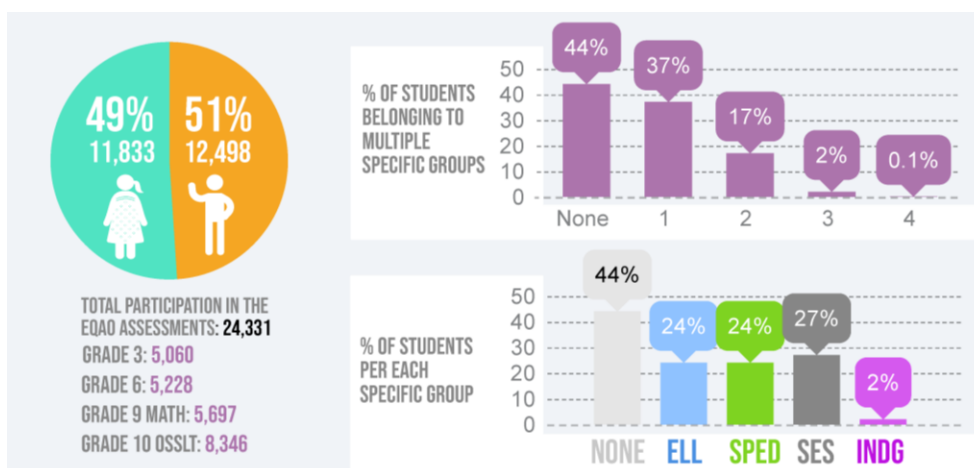
- **Itinerant Teacher Professional Development session** - teachers were given the opportunity to share lesson plans, reflect on learning and speak to their commitments moving forward - 14 schools, and intensely with 10 teachers
- **Seeing the Light Inuit Conference** - teachers attended one day conference presented by the Ottawa Inuit Children's Center - 10 teachers
- **Wabano cultural workshops** - teachers attended one day conference presented by the Wabano Health and Wellness Center - 5 teachers
- **Provincial Indigenous Education Gathering** - provincial learning session in the fall of 2018

Engagement with Community - 22% of funds

- **Partnerships** - various meetings with community partners and events within the City of Ottawa to strengthen relationships within the Indigenous Community
- **Summer Solstice transportation** - transportation provided to various schools to attend Education Day - 16 schools
- **Professional Learning for central staff** - Approximately 40-50 central staff at the OCDSB listened to survivor, Thomas Loutit on Orange Shirt Day.
- **Inuit School Liaison Worker** - workshops delivered by the Ottawa Inuit Children's Center's Bridging the Gap program; included school presentations to students and educators, family support as requested
- **Ongoing** - teacher support and coaching

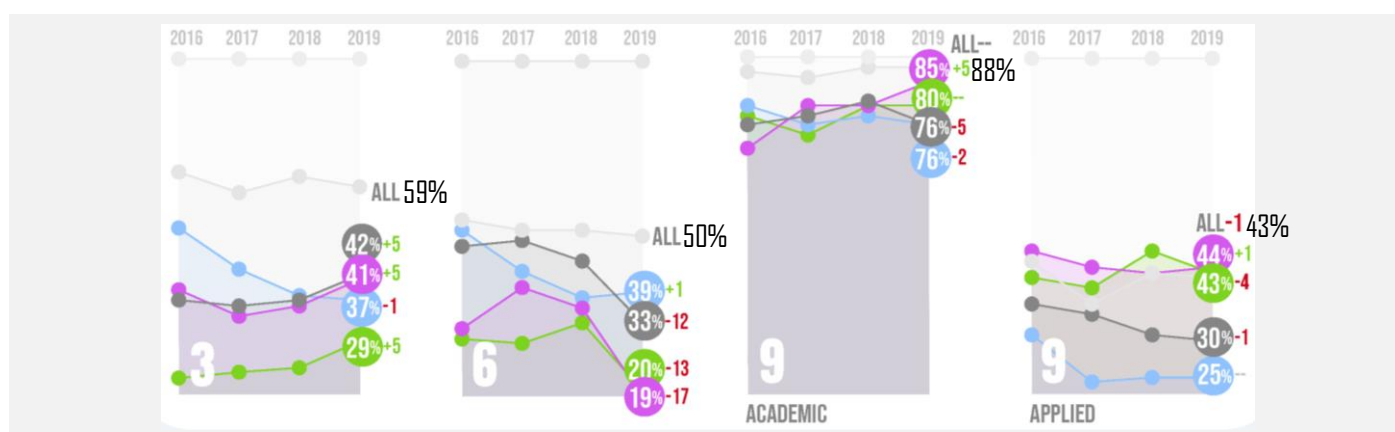
2018-2019 ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS FOR STUDENTS WHO SELF-IDENTIFIED AS INDIGENOUS.

Overall, a total of 74,719 students were enrolled in the OCDSB schools on October 31, 2018. Of these, 24,331 participated in the EQAO assessments during 2018-2019. Of the 24331 students, 2% (452 students) self-identified as indigenous.



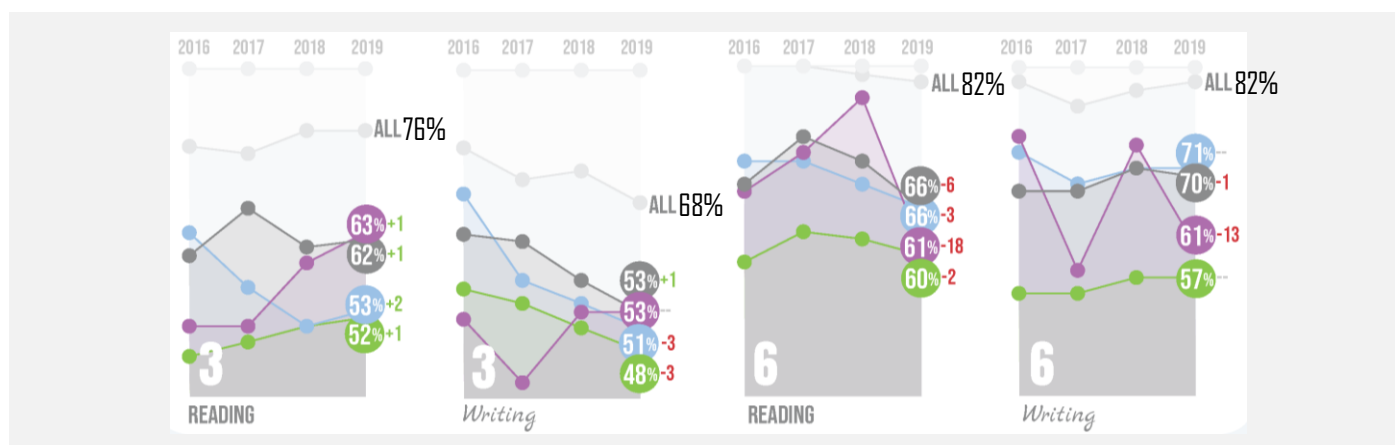
EQAO Mathematics Assessment in Grades 3, 6 and 9 **INDG.**

In Grades 3 and 6 mathematics, the proportion of students who self-identified as indigenous and who have met the provincial standard is considerably lower than District results. Achievement gaps were greatest for students in Grade 6; however, students in Grade 9 who self-identified as indigenous performed as well as all students. Trends over time indicate a downward trend in Grade 6 and an upward trend in grades 3 and 9.



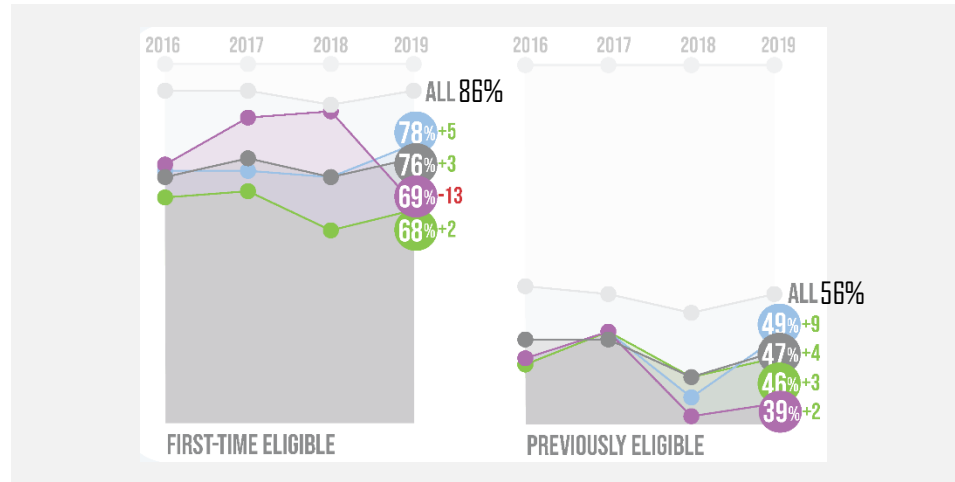
EQAO Reading and Writing assessment in Grades 3 and 6 **INDG.**

Similarly to mathematics, performance of students who self-identified as indigenous was lower than all students in grades 3 and 6 Reading and Writing. Achievement gaps were greatest in Grade 6. Trends over time indicate improvement in Grade 3 and a general decline in Grade 6 Reading; results are mixed for Grade 6 Writing.



EQAO OSSLT INDG.

The performance in the OSSLT is also below the board result, both among the first-time eligible (69%) and previously eligible (39%) students who self-identified as indigenous. Trends over time indicate an abrupt decline from 2018 among first-time eligible students and a slight upward trend among previously eligible students over the same time period.

**CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND COHORT GRADUATION**

Credit accumulation among Grade 9 (68%) and Grade 10 (53%) students who self-identified as indigenous is considerably lower than District-level results at 88% and 80%, respectively. In Grade 11, outcomes are identical at 67%. Similarly, the 5-year cohort graduation rate for students who self-identified as indigenous was 57%, well below the 88% observed for the District overall.

**Appendix C,
Supporting Indigenous Learners at the
OCDSB Financial Expenditures**

In Ontario school boards are funded separately for Indigenous Education. The majority of this funding is in the form of the Indigenous Supplemental Grant, which has three allocations:

- I. Native Language
- II. Native Studies
- III. Per-pupil Amount

Indigenous Supplement Grant	
Native Studies	\$1,963,886
Per-Pupil Amount	Elementary \$476,008 Secondary \$218,902
Native Languages	0
Board Action Plan	\$126,240
Total	\$2,785,036

	Operating Budget		
	2018-2019		
Compensation	FTE	Budget	Actual
Indigenous - Vice Principal	1.00	\$129,199	\$124,177
Indigenous - Native Studies Sections - Teacher	3.67	\$393,375	\$397,395
Urban Aboriginal High School Teacher	2.00	\$214,373	\$214,995
Indigenous - Instructional Coach (K-12)	1.00	\$107,187	\$108,282
Indigenous - Itinerant Instructional Coach (K-8)	1.00	\$104,697	\$107,498
Native Studies - Inuit Center Teacher	1.00	\$104,697	\$104,697

Native Studies - Inuit Center - Early Childhood Educator	1.00	\$ 57,879	\$ 53,241
Indigenous Office Support	1.00	\$ 77,913	\$ 49,179
Supplies, Services and Release Time		\$166,909	\$157,609
Total Operating Expenses	1.00	\$1,356,149	\$1,317,073

** The budget shown for supplies, services and release time has been adjusted to equal actual funding provided by the Indigenous Education Supplemental Grant.*

School districts also receive funding through Education Programs Other (EPO). These funds are enveloped for specific initiatives and there is a Ministry reporting requirement attached to their use. The chart below outlines the allocations and expenditures for the 2018-2019 school year.

Education Programs Other (EPO)		
	Budget	Expenditures
Support for Implementation of Revised Curriculum	\$56,845	\$12,399
Student Support Re-Engagement Coordinator	\$100,000	\$84,520
Total EPO	\$172,215	\$96,919
Total Operating + EPO	\$1,528,364	\$1,413,992

** In the 2018-2019 school year, the shortage of occasional teaching staff had a direct impact on the delivery of professional development. This resulted in an inability to spend funds.*



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

November 14, 2019

6:00 pm

Gloucester High School

2060 Ogilvie Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Members: Raiglee Alorut, Inini McHugh

Non-Voting Members: Wendy Hough (Trustee), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Jody Alexander (Vice-Principal, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education), Jesse Kavanaugh (Student), Chantel Verner (Instructional Coach)

Staff and Guests: Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Ganaabouté Gagné (Student Trustee), Josh Lewis (Coordinator, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education), Nina Stanton, Kareena Butler, Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Opening

Vice-Principal Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Mr. Lewis opened the meeting with a smudging.

2. New Business

Student Trustee Gagné shared that both he and Student Trustee Wijeweera have been visiting schools to speak to students about their learning experiences. Through these visits, they have become cognizant that the 'Implementation of Indigenous Studies' Course, an Grade 11 English language course with an Indigenous focus, serves to deliver the greatest in-class appeal to non-Indigenous students. Some Indigenous students have expressed disparagement towards the program, as cultural context is rife with complexities. Ms. Verner is an Educator who leads the delivery of these courses. She responded that these courses were not designed to teach culture and the message provided at the outset of the course highlights that the teacher is not the expert. She added that in advance of every session, notice is provided to students describing the upcoming course outline. This disclosure of potentially sensitive material gives the student the opportunity to decide if the subject matter will induce anxiety or trauma. Vice-Principal Alexander encouraged Trustee Gagné to bring forth any further concerns heard from students. She noted that the program is being offered through the assistance of Indigenous Leaders and community builders.

A student requested an update on the plan to offer Indigenous language credit courses to preserve culture. Mr. Mitchell responded that one of the hurdles at this time is the lack of accredited instructors from the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) to teach the courses. A way forward is being created to have The Inuit Elder's Circle recommend to the OCT to recognize teaching staff, through their language fluency, and subsequently provide certification to teach. There is potential to have language credit courses offered at the high school level. Mr. Mitchell noted that Inuktitut is the first language being supported by the 'Elders circle' however the Ministry of Education is looking at this model for other Indigenous languages across the province. Mr. Mitchell presented this information at the Independent First Nations Language Gathering on 7 November 2019. In supporting curriculum, in some elementary schools 'talking circles' are part of the teacher's toolkit. Specific expectations in these circles include speaking to communicate and listening to understand by reading stories aloud and to hear the sounds of language in songs and poems.

Mr. McHugh suggested the Community Indigenous Educators meet with the District's Learning Support Services (LSS) Team, ideally before the launch of the school year. Vice-Principal Alexander plans to make this request to build relationships and develop knowledge towards common goals, group discussions and synthesis of ideas. A few members of the OCDSB Indigenous Education Learning Team recently had the opportunity to meet with LSS to discuss in-year strategy.

Mr. McHugh queried whether there was progress on staffing expansion for the OCDSB Indigenous Education Learning Team. Superintendent Baker responded that there has been new growth on the team, whereas the Equity and Diversity Team is staffed with one person. Trustee Blackburn established that expectations must be realistic within the climate of budget cuts to public education, noting that she would be pleased should the staffing complement remain at the current status quo.

Ms. Alorut inquired on behalf of several parents, wishing to learn more about the invitation process to attend the Indigenous Youth Symposium. Vice-Principal Alexander explained that the information is sent to all District Principals. The Principals from every high school invite four or more Indigenous students to use the day of learning to attend the Symposium. These invited students are encouraged to invite a friend, Indigenous or non-Indigenous, to attend with them. There were over 325 students who attended this year. A student expressed interest in changing the venue in coming years. Ms. Verner noted that Algonquin College, Carleton University and The University of Ottawa all have offered space in their venues for future Indigenous Youth Symposiums. She added that the exposure to post-secondary learning environments benefit high school students.

Student Trustee Gagne encouraged disclosure of the purpose of the video booth footage collected at the Indigenous Youth Symposium. Vice-Principal Alexander

acknowledged that consent from the students will be sought in advance of any video production.

3. Presentations and Discussion

There were no presentations scheduled.

4. Reports

4.1 17 October 2019 IEAC Report

The 17 October 2019 report was received. Vice-Principal Alexander thanked the council for their feedback and contributions to the Assessment Tool for Indigenous Education. A revised version of this document, along with the Board Action Plan on Indigenous Education will be presented to this group early in 2020. There was a request for an organization chart to accompany these important documents.

4.2 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Baker highlighted the following events and matters:

- The 13th Annual Rainbow Youth Forum on 9 November 2019 was a well-attended equity event;
- Indigenous Students on a cross-boundary transfer are encouraged to speak with their school's administration or guidance staff if they require support with transportation. Transportation applications are provided by schools for specialized circumstances. Trustee Hough suggested a contact telephone number be added to the District website; and
- A great amount of data is being collected by the school to support various initiatives. Discussions are ongoing with the District to address how best to use the collected data.

5. Information and Invitation

Vice-Principal Alexander wished everyone a Merry Christmas. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 16 January 2020.

Mr. Mitchell mentioned that he has shared the work of IEAC at the Assistant Deputy Minister level and commented that he was proud of the advancements the council has made to date.

6. Closing

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.