

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC AGENDA

Tuesday, November 10, 2020, 7:30 pm  
Zoom Meeting

**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	
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9.	Information Items:	
9.1.	Report from OPSBA (if required)	
9.2.	New Ministry Initiatives Update (if required)	

9.3. OSTA Update (if required)

10. New Business - Information and Inquiries

11. Adjournment

## Mental Health and BIPOC Students

### OCDSB Trustee Meeting:

Good evening , Board of Trustees, Director of Education and other members of the Committee of the Whole.

I come to you as the Executive Director of the National Collaboration for Youth Mental Health NCYMH. NCYMH is a Canadian Registered Charity founded in 2002. We are a group of dedicated educators, youth, university students and humanitarians from across Canada who decided that our responsibility to children, youth and university students involves caring about their emotional and psychological, mental health, as well as their physical wellbeing so that learning could be achieved and students could reach their full potential.

With support from our various sponsors, NCYMH has developed programs that promote mental health of youth in Canada and support the resilience and recovery of youth experiencing mental illness. NCYMH accomplishes this mission through advocacy, education, research and service. Our tools include research and information services, training workshops, advocacy meetings, youth peer mental health clubs, and promotional materials such as fliers. One program, Systemic Discrimination Curriculum Workshops, acts as a social advocate to encourage public action and commitment to strengthening school and community mental health services. This program is based on the principles of empowerment, peer support, community support, and youth participation and involvement.

Keeping in line with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board's Mental Health Strategy and commitment to "Identity Based Data Collection" , we at NCYMH believe having access to reliable information on positive mental health and mental illness is crucial for students and needs to be addressed.

Even if students have not experienced mental illness, it is very likely that they know someone who has. Consider the following statistics to get an idea of just how widespread the effects of mental illness are in society, among young people in particular.

Globally, statistical Facts from the United Nations, World Health Organization (September 28, 2020) on Adolescent Mental Health states

- **One in six people are aged 10-19 years.**
- **Mental health conditions account for 16% of the global burden of disease and injury in people aged 10-19 years.**
- **Half of all mental health conditions start by 14 years of age but most cases are undetected and untreated(1).**
- **Globally, depression is one of the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents.**
- **Suicide is the third leading cause of death in 15-19-year-olds.**
- **The consequences of not addressing adolescent mental health conditions extend to adulthood, impairing both physical and mental health and limiting opportunities to lead fulfilling lives as adults.**

From a Canadian perspective, according to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, in any given year, 1 in 5 Canadians experiences a mental illness or addiction problem. By the time Canadians reach 40 years of age, 1 in 2 have—or have had—a mental illness.

Who is affected? According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health:

- 70% of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence.
- Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to experience mental illness and/or substance use disorders than any other age group.
- 34% of Ontario high-school students indicate a moderate-to-serious level of psychological distress (symptoms of anxiety and depression). 14% indicate a serious level of psychological distress.

From an Equity Lens, a report titled A STATISTICAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF INDIGENOUS MENTAL HEALTH IN CANADA states, in Indigenous communities, suicide is the leading cause of death for young people aged 10-29. The report cites Statistics Canada which states that suicide rates among First Nations youth are five to seven times that of non-indigenous youth, depending on their location and affiliation, with some of the worst suicide rates in Canada being amongst Inuit youth who are eleven times more likely to commit suicide than the national average.

A recent Statistic Canada report released June 23, 2020 titled “Indigenous people and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic” states Six in ten Indigenous participants report that their mental health has worsened since the onset of physical distancing. Among Indigenous crowdsourced participants, 38% reported fair or poor mental health, 32% reported good mental health, and 31% reported excellent or very good mental health. When asked how their mental health has changed since physical distancing began, 60% of Indigenous participants indicated that their mental health has become “somewhat worse” or “much worse”

Again from an Equity Lens, Black Mental Health Canada Incorporated, an organization whose vision is to bring awareness that Mental Health issues are a real and significant problem within the black community states the current issues are

1. Black individuals are more likely to qualify as low-income, experience unemployment and be uninsured.
2. Negative attitudes towards the health care system reduces black individuals' willingness to seek and receive care.
3. Mental health issues are not openly discussed in the black community and thus individuals struggle silently.
4. Treatment providers are less likely to be black and many are not educated on black culture and black struggles.

Their proposed solution

1. A network of culturally responsive care providers.
2. Affordable and accessible mental health services.
3. To increase awareness & education of mental health issues and create space for open dialogue .
4. To collaborate with community agencies and partners to address mental health issues that impact recidivism.
5. To offer diagnosis & assessments at early onset for black children at risk of ADHD, ODD & other cognitive deficits.

That being said, the National Collaboration for Youth Mental Health understands schools provide an ideal environment and natural opportunities to address issues of mental health and illness. Schools are well positioned to be at the vanguard of public health strategies designed to prevent and detect mental health disorders among young people. Educators can play an important role by delivering accurate, comprehensive information and by challenging the stereotypes about mental illness held by the general community. Mental health and illness are issues that are urgent and needs to be addressed immediately. We also believe the OCDSB cannot address this alone. In the spirit of Reconciliation and the OCDSB commitment to The International Decade for People of African Descent proclaimed by the United Nations, the National Collaboration for Youth Mental Health is looking forward to working closely with the OCDSB to further collaborate on an action plan that will assist the OCDSB in reaching its goal of student success and well being for all.





## MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 20-153

**To:** Trustees  
Student Trustees

**FROM:** Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board  
Prince Duah, Superintendent of Instruction

**Date:** 10 November 2020

**Re:** **Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak**

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On August 26, 2020, the government released the Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak document. This guide was developed in consultation with public health experts and aimed to help child cares reopen safely. The challenge that faced child care programs in schools with the document was that many guidelines differed from schools. The disparity was magnified when families whose children attend Before and After School programs were expected to abide by conflicting guidelines.

To continue supporting childcare safe and healthy operations across the province, on November 6, 2020, the Ministry shared revised *Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak: Child Care Reopening* document and a revised *2020-21 Before and After School Kindergarten to Grade 6 Policies and Guidelines*. In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health and education partners, they have updated the guidance document based on the latest public health advice and provided clarity in specific sections to align closely with the Operational Guidance for Management in Schools.

Key changes in these documents include:

- Revised guidance around cleaning spaces and equipment to align with schools' practices, including updated guidance on cleaning outdoor playground equipment;
- Revisions to the masking and eye protection requirements to clarify the difference in requirements between staff/providers, parents or other adults, children in grade 4 and above, and younger children (grade 3 and under) to align with schools;
- Revised guidance around screening practices to clarify that screening before arrival at the child care setting is preferred, encourage the use of the provincial screening tool, and remove the requirement to maintain daily screening records;

- Revised guidance on protocols for when someone in the program is symptomatic, including testing and reporting advice, and how to treat the siblings of someone who is symptomatic, to more closely align with guidance in schools;
- Clarified that a medical note is not required to return to a child care program after an individual has become ill;
- Revised the definition of an outbreak in a child care setting to two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in children, staff/providers or other visitors with an epidemiological link, where at least one case could have been infected in the child care setting;
- Revised guidance on reporting serious occurrences to specify that licensees are no longer required to report a serious occurrence for suspected cases and if a parent has a case of COVID-19; and
- Revised guidance on the inclusion of Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) staff in childcare settings to permit the licensee's discretion to determine which SNR staff are essential to provide in-person service in the child care setting, rather than deferring to public health officers.

This revised Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak document has been designed for use in conjunction with the Child Care and Early Year Act (CCEYA) and its regulations. In the event of a conflict between this document and CCEYA, this document will prevail. The local public health unit's advice must be followed, even if it is different from this guidance document.

An updated EarlyON Child and Family Centre guidance document that aligns with these documents, where applicable, will be released in the coming weeks.

Should you have any questions, please contact Prince Duah, Superintendent of Instruction at 596-8211, ext.8287.

c.c: Senior Staff  
Manager of Board Services  
Corporate Records





# COVID-19 Update

## Board Meeting

### November 10, 2020

# Tonight's Update

- Case Management
- Changes in Provincial Direction
- Impacts on Staffing and Enrolment
- Financial Update



# COVID-19 Case Management

As of 4:30 pm today, the OCDSB has reported:

- Student cases – 38 active; 119 resolved
- Staff cases – 5 active; 19 resolved
- No classes, cohort or schools closed at this time

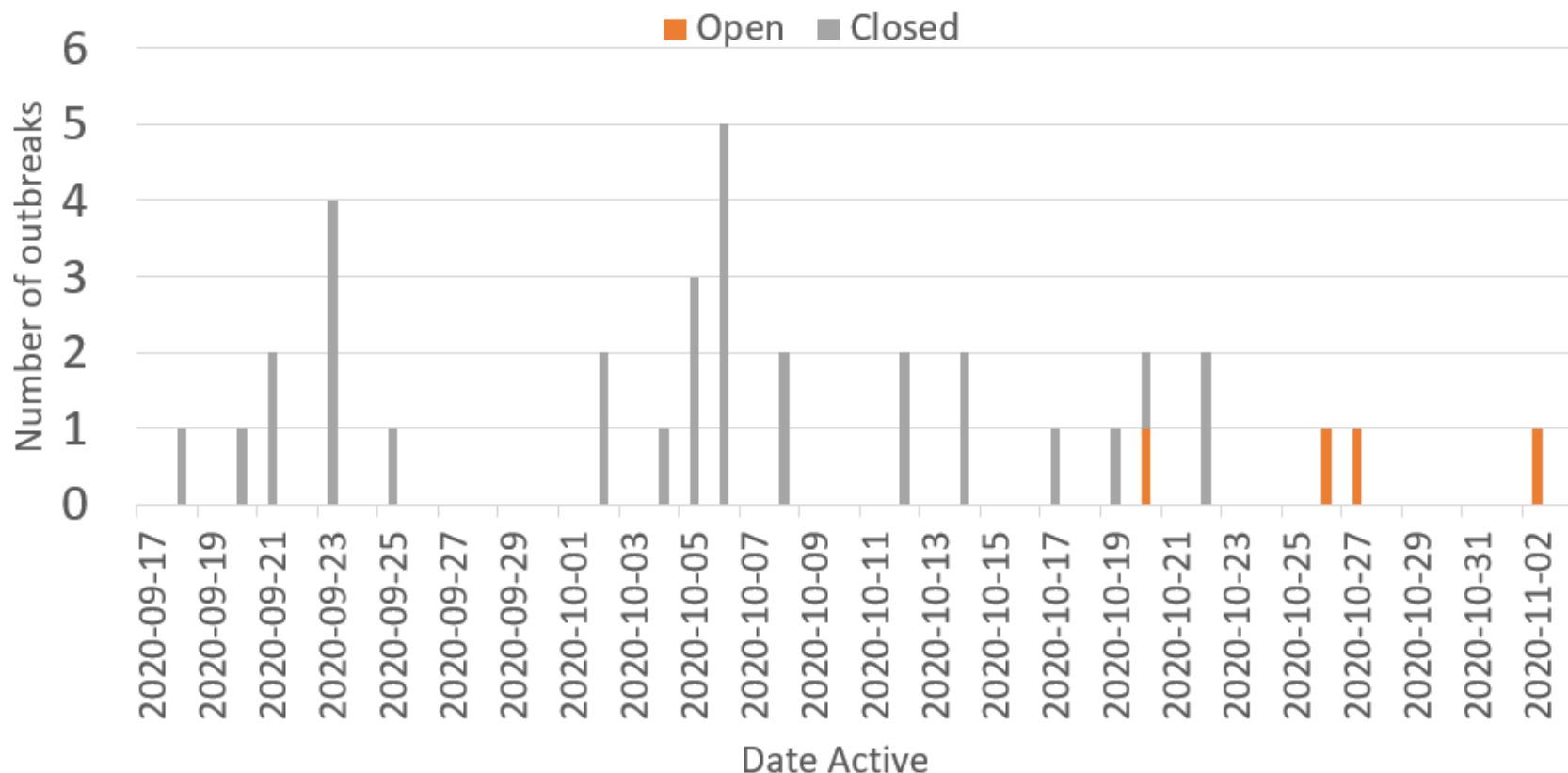


## OCDSB Total Cases by Panel

	<b>Student Cases</b>	<b>Staff Cases</b>	<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>Schools with No Cases</b>
Elementary	99	15	114	44
Secondary	56	8	64	10
Total	155	23	178	54

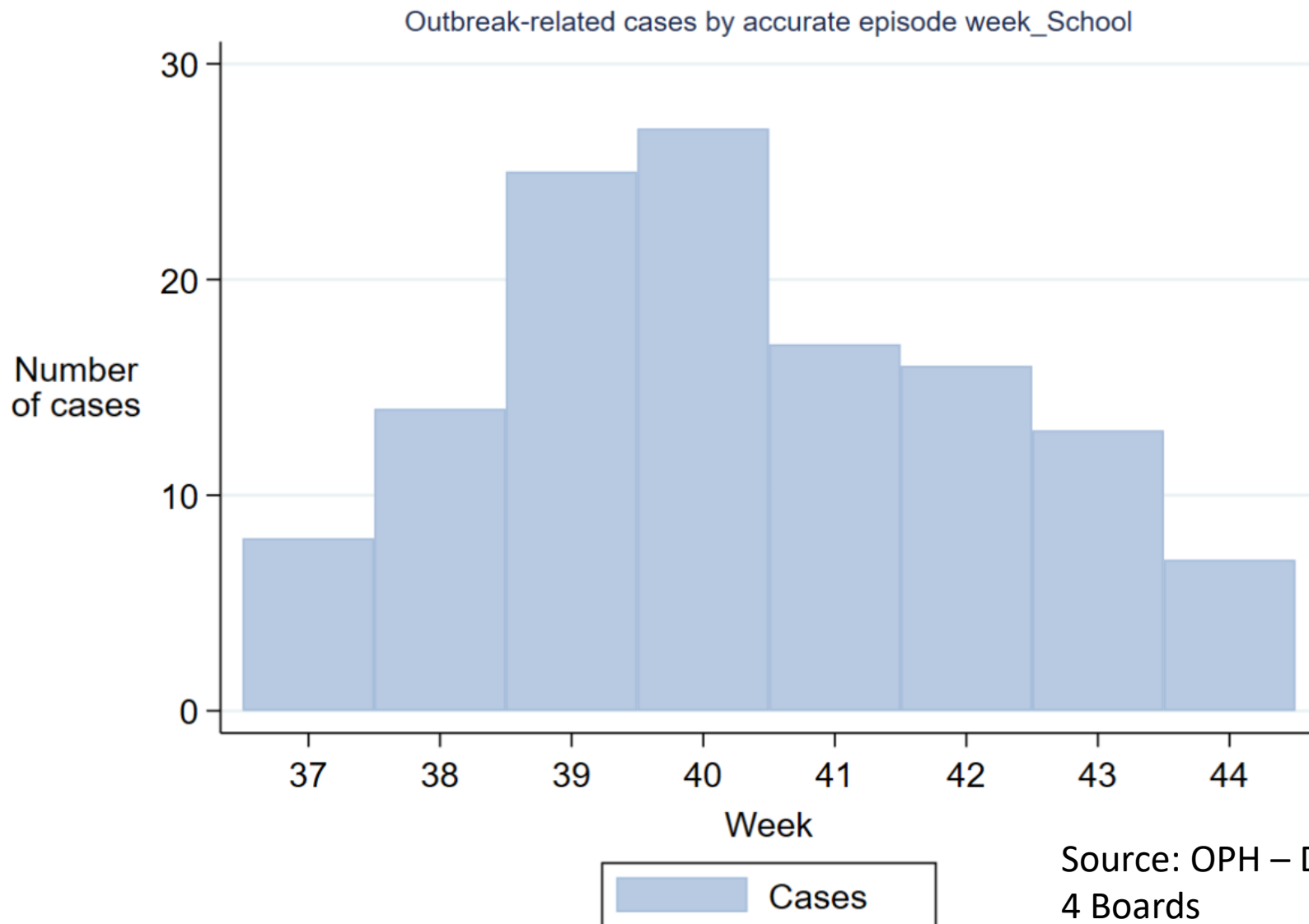
# School Outbreak Data in Ottawa (OPH)

Number of school outbreaks by date active, Ottawa, up to Nov 3



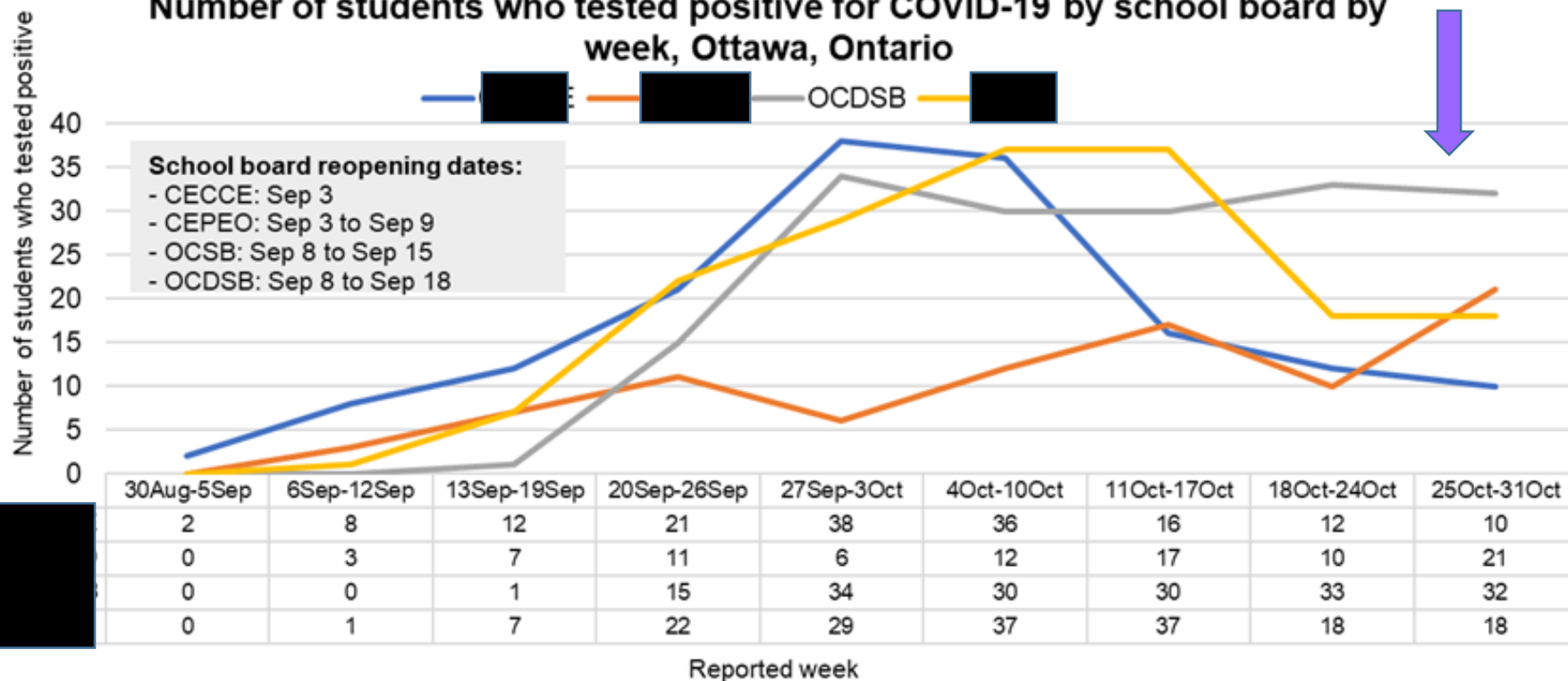
Source: OPH – Data for All 4 Boards

# School Outbreak Cases by Week of Onset (OPH)



# All In Person School Cases by Week

Number of students who tested positive for COVID-19 by school board by week, Ottawa, Ontario



Source: OPH – Data for All 4 Boards

# New Provincial Guidance

- Colour Coded Monitoring System
- Updated Operational Guidance for Schools
- Updated Operational Guidance for Before and After School Programs
- Updated Operational Guidance for Childcare





# OPH COVID-19 MONITORING



**Ottawa's Core Indicators for COVID-19 Monitoring**

Domain	Indicator	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
Virus Spread and Containment	COVID-19 Community Cases (7-day moving average)	<5 cases/day OR Sustained decrease for >14 days	5-10 cases/day OR Decreasing trend for 14 days	5-10 cases/day OR Stable trend for 14 days	>10 cases/day OR Increasing trend for 14 days
	Percent of COVID-19 Community Cases That Have No Known Source	Sustained decrease for >14 days	Decreasing trend for 14 days	Stable trend for 14 days	Increasing trend for 14 days
	COVID-19 Healthcare Institutional Outbreaks (active)				>10 active/day OR Increasing trend for 14 days
	COVID-19 Schools & Childcare Establishments Outbreaks (active)				Increasing trend for 14 days
	COVID-19 Hospitalization				Increasing trend for 14 days
Health Care System Capacity	Acute Care Bed Occupancy	≤ 85%			> 85%
	ICU Bed Occupancy	≤ 70%			> 70%
Public Health	Cases Reached Within 24 Hours	≥ 90%			< 90%
	Contacts Reached Within 24 Hours	≥ 90%			< 90%
Laboratory Testing	Time from Testing to Reporting of Positive Result to Ottawa Public Health	≥ 60% within 24 hours ≥ 80% within 48 hours			<60% within 24 hours <80% within 48 hours
	COVID-19 Percent Positivity	Trend steady near 0%	Trend decreasing	Trend steady, not near 0%	Trend increasing



# Updated Ministry Guidance for Schools

- Public health determines when an individual or cohorts are dismissed, schools closed and return/reopening;
- Added guidance on reporting COVID-19 absences;
- Clarified daily screening is necessary;
- Added guidance on self-isolation periods to align with Ministry of Health guidance;
- Siblings of symptomatic children do not need to isolate unless the sibling tests positive for COVID-19;
- Addition of guidance around continuity of learning and expectations that boards to pivot to remote learning when needed;
- Revised language around testing;
- Medical notes and proof of a negative test are not required for an individual to return to school.



# Before and After School Programs

## Kindergarten – Grade 6

- Align cleaning spaces and equipment with practices in schools,
- Clarifications to the description of masking and eye protection requirements for staff/providers, parents or other adults, children in grade 4 and above, and children in grade 3 and under.
- Daily screening required, record keeping requirements updated
- Revised guidance on protocols for symptomatic individuals
- Revised definition of an outbreak in a before and after school program setting
- Additional guidance on the use of alcohol-based hand rub
- Updates to communicating with parents and the reporting of information on before and after school programs to the ministry
- Revised requirements to clean and disinfect outdoor play structures between each group and focus on proper hand hygiene



# Summary

- Case Management Process operating more smoothly;
- Improved alignment of practice between schools and EDP;
- Rates of confirmed cases are distributed between elementary and secondary panel;
- In school transmission is extremely low in OCDSB;





## MEMORANDUM

**Memo No. 20-144**

**TO:** Trustees  
Student Trustees

**FROM:** Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board  
Michael Carson, Chief Financial Officer  
Janice McCoy, Superintendent of Human Resources

**DATE:** 06 November 2020

**RE:** **Update on Enrolment and Academic Staffing**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update to the Committee of the Whole on student enrolment and staffing.

As in previous years, enrolment projections for the 2020-2021 school year were used for purposes of approving academic staffing levels for 2020-2021. More specifically, enrolment is a key determinant of the total number of elementary and secondary classroom teaching positions that are required to meet regulated class size requirements. Projected enrolment figures were also used in developing the approved budget, since enrolment is a key driver of funding under the Grants for Student Needs.

The enrolment projections used for staffing purposes was 49,646 elementary students and 24,988 secondary students. During the budget process, staff flagged the uncertainty related to enrolment due to the pandemic as a potential risk factor. In particular, staff highlighted uncertainty with respect to international students and kindergarten students in particular.

Enrolments are generally confirmed early in the school year, so that staffing levels, and more specifically, classroom staffing levels, can be reconciled based on actual enrolments, both at the District and school level. At the elementary level, actual enrolment figures as of the second week of school are normally relied on to inform fall staffing adjustments and classroom reorganizations as well as for Ministry class size reporting. At secondary, September 30 enrolment is used for purposes of reconciling staffing, with many adjustments deferred to the second semester.

This year, with the shift from in person to remote learning, a major reorganization was undertaken just prior to school resuming, in order to shift staff from in person to remote learning based on the number of students opting for that mode of learning. The

substantial reorganizations that were required to accommodate the shift were disruptive for staff and students as adjustments continued into the school year.

It has been more difficult than usual to confirm actual enrolments this year, for a number of reasons, including students on wait lists who were not initially attending either in person or remotely, late arrivals of students who were travelling and needed to quarantine on returning to Canada, and identifying students who were registered but where families had decided on other options such as home schooling, private school or, in the case of kindergarten students, deferring school attendance. The actual enrolment figures from late October indicate that enrolment is lower than projected at both elementary and secondary. This is not unique to the OCDSB, as many large urban boards, in particular, are reporting lower than projected enrolment, particularly in elementary schools. From a budget perspective, the potential impact could be as much as \$24 million in reduced revenue. More detailed information will be provided as part of the revised estimates, which will be presented to the Board in December. More detailed information on enrolment and staffing reconciliation and potential impacts is provided below.

#### Elementary Enrolment and Staffing

There are currently 2,213 elementary classes (excluding specialized program classes) in place across the district, which includes the 70 additional classes that were added based on additional funding or reallocated to in person schools to keep class sizes lower. As of October 30, 2020, actual enrolment figures show that total enrolment is approximately 1700 students below the figure that was used for budget purposes. The largest reduction between projected and actual enrolment is at kindergarten, where actual enrolment is almost 900 fewer than projected. It should be noted that enrolment figures increased by approximately 600 students between September 30 and October 30. At least some of this increase can be attributed to staff efforts to place students on waiting lists where space was available, and/or outreach from schools to students who were not attending.

The actual enrolment figure generates approximately 80 fewer classroom than the projected enrolment. This number is offset by the number of additional positions that were added from the funding provided to reduce class size, so that the actual difference is approximately 40 classes. As indicated above, reconciliation of staffing and enrolment is normally achieved through reorganization, either to add classes where the enrolment is higher than projected, or to reduce or combine small classes where the enrolment is lower than projected. Reorganizations will result in at least some students changing classes, including moving from straight grades to combined grade classes, and teachers being reassigned either within the school or to another school. Staffing reductions at this time of year would be achieved by ending long term assignments and reassigning permanent teachers to these assignments instead.

Although not impossible, a reorganization to reduce by 40 classrooms would create a significant level disruption to students and staff. Reorganizations are more challenging this year given the pressure to keep in-person class sizes as low as possible, within existing resources. There are some schools/programs where classes are very small (below 10 students) but combining classes is not feasible because it would result in combined grades classes of 4 or 5 grades ( for example grade1, 2, 3, and 4 students combined to make one class).

In an effort to identify potential reductions, staff are currently reviewing the school organizations to identify places where a reorganization could take place without a significant impact on class sizes and where disruption to the school can be minimized. Based on a preliminary review, staff has identified approximately 25 potential reductions. The timing of any reorganizations is also being considered to alleviate the impact of the changes for students and staff. For example, subject to cost considerations, it may be prudent to postpone reorganizations until January to coincide with students returning after the winter break and to align more closely with the end of Term 1. Staff will also continue to monitor enrolment closely to respond to changes that might impact or reduce the need for reorganizations.

### Secondary Enrolment and Staffing

At secondary, actual enrolment as of the end of October is 183 students below projected enrolment, which is less than a 1% difference from the projected enrolment of approximately 24,000 students. From a staffing perspective, it means the system is staffed at approximately 13 FTE higher than enrolment would normally generate. This translates into approximately 84 sections or classes that would need to be reduced to reconcile enrolment and staffing. Adjustments to reconcile enrolment and staffing would be actioned in the next quadmester or, more likely, in the second semester at this point to avoid disruption of classes. Based on a school-by-school review of the impact of enrolment changes, it would be difficult for some schools to make adjustments without impacting program choice and their ability to offer all pathways, while other schools, where enrolment is higher than projected, need to add at least some classes in order to provide all students with courses. Staff will continue to work with schools to identify opportunities to reconcile enrolment and staffing. Efforts are also ongoing through the schools to engage students who have yet to attend school, including offering students the option to complete Independent Learning Courses (ILCs) developed through TVO with whom the Ministry of Education has established a partnership for this purpose. Students who take ILCs will continue to be connected to supported by their home schools through outreach from guidance and student success teachers.

### Summary

In summary, at the elementary level, staff will be proceeding with reviewing opportunities to combine or reduce classes in schools without significantly impacting on class sizes of in person schools, where possible, with a view to reducing the current overstaffing of approximately 40 classroom positions. At secondary, staff will be proceeding with making some changes for the second semester to address enrolment shifts between schools, and with efforts to re-engage students where possible through various options. Based on the challenging nature of the year, senior staff is trying to maintain as much stability as possible, while also being mindful of the financial impacts of these decisions.

Further updates to enrolment and staffing will be provided as required. A more detailed analysis of the financial situation will be provided to the Board as part of the usual cycle of financial reporting.

cc. Senior Staff  
 Manager, Board Services  
 Corporate Records







## MEMORANDUM

**Memo No. 20-134**

**TO:** Trustees  
Student Trustees

**FROM:** Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board  
Mike Carson, Chief Financial Officer

**DATE:** 10 November 2020

**RE:** **2020-21 Priorities and Partnerships Fund Grants for COVID Purposes**

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Subsequent to the presentation of the 2020-2021 Staff-Recommended Budget, the Ministry of Education announced a number of new Priorities and Partnerships Fund (PPF) grants to support school reopening plans following the COVID-19 closures. PPF grants provide funding to school districts to address specific priorities identified by the Ministry.

To date, the Ministry has allocated PPF grants totaling \$17.8 million to the District for COVID purposes. These grants are supported by transfer payment agreements (TPAs) which stipulate the intent of each grant and the type of investments that can be made with the funding. A financial summary is presented as Appendix A to this memo. In addition to showing the amount of funding by grant, the summary presents expected expenses split between staffing costs and operating costs (supplies, services and equipment). Full time equivalent staffing numbers by employee group are also shown. It is expected that all allocated PPF funding for COVID-related purposes will be spent by the end of the school year.

Two other funding categories are also shown on Appendix A. The first category is the internal provision approved by the Board using the District's accumulated surplus. It has been identified for use in providing some of the support for vice-principal release time for the remainder of the school year with the balance being reserved for the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE). The second category is an estimated amount of the centralized supply management grant that is being retained by the Ministry to support the distribution of PPE and supplies. These supplies are procured by the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS) and shipped to districts based on identified needs.

To assist with understanding the nature of the investments, a description of each grant's intended purpose and the types of allowable expenses is presented in Appendix B. The descriptions are based on information shown in the TPAs.

It is important to recognize that the TPAs were only recently received. Finance department staff is working with the various departments to formalize how the funds will be used to meet the District's needs. Accordingly, the anticipated spending shown on the financial summary should be viewed as preliminary.

Please direct questions to Mike Carson at [michael.carson@ocdsb.ca](mailto:michael.carson@ocdsb.ca).

Attach

cc     Senior Staff  
         Manager of Board Services  
         Manager of Financial Services  
         Corporate Records

**2020-21 Priorities and Partnerships Fund Grants for COVID Purposes****Funding and Projected Expenses**

Finance-20201110-KG

Funding Description	Funding and Projected Expenses				Full Time Equivalents (FTE)							
	Grant	Expenses		Available	PVP	ETFO	OSSTF	PSSP	PSSU	ESP	Lunch Monitor	Total
		Staffing	Operating Costs (Supplies, Services, Equipment)									
	\$	\$	\$	\$								
<b>Allocated PPF Grants for COVID-Purposes</b>												-
TPA 1 - Schedule C -Enhanced Cleaning Supplies	140,798	-	140,798	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TPA 2 - Schedule B-Additional Mental Health Supports	343,767	261,363	82,404	-	-	-	-	2.50	-	-	-	2.50
TPA 2 - Schedule C-Special Education	410,092	410,092	-	-	-	3.75	-	-	-	-	-	3.75
TPA 3 - Project B1-Additional Custodial Staff	1,816,446	1,816,446	-	-	-	-	-	-	61.00	-	-	61.00
TPA 3 - Project B2-Health & Safety Training	369,988	-	369,988	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TPA 3 - Project B3 (i)-Additional Teachers	1,301,325	1,301,325	-	-	-	11.00	1.00	-	-	-	-	12.00
TPA 3 - Project B4-Remote Learning	552,323	552,323	-	-	0.67	-	-	-	-	10.00	-	10.67
TPA 3 - Project B5-Additional Non-Permanent Teachers	2,147,532	2,147,532	-	-	-	20.00	-	-	-	-	-	20.00
TPA 3 - Project B6-Additional Funding for Remote Learning	1,089,445	1,089,445	-	-	7.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.50
TPA 3 - Project B7-School Reopening Emerging Issues	3,242,261	3,242,261	-	-	12.33	-	-	-	-	-	80.00	92.33
TPA 3 - Project B8-Funding for High Priority Areas	2,801,382	2,017,116	784,266	-	-	10.25	0.33	-	29.00	-	-	39.58
TPA 4 - Project B1-Ventilation	1,681,500	-	1,681,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TPA 4 - Projects B2 and B3-Transportation	1,877,130	-	1,877,130	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subtotal	17,773,989	12,837,903	4,936,086	-	20.50	45.00	1.33	2.50	90.00	10.00	80.00	249.33
<b>Internal Provision from Accumulated Surplus</b>												
COVID-19 Response Fund (Internal Provision)	4,471,791	3,224,405	1,247,386	-	18.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.50
subtotal	4,471,791	3,224,405	1,247,386	-	18.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.50
<b>Centralized Supply Management Grants (Estimated)</b>												
Masks and Personal Protective Equipment	2,100,000	-	2,100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Enhanced Cleaning Allocation (Supplies)	875,000	-	875,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
subtotal	2,975,000	-	2,975,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,220,780</b>	<b>16,062,308</b>	<b>9,158,472</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>39.00</b>	<b>45.00</b>	<b>1.33</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>90.00</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>80.00</b>	<b>267.83</b>

**2020-21 Priorities and Partnerships Fund Grants for COVID Purposes****Grant Descriptions**

Finance-20201105-KG

Appendix B  
to Memo 20-134

The following descriptions are based on information shown in the transfer payment agreements (TPAs).

**TPA 1 - Schedule C - Enhanced Cleaning Supplies****\$140,798**

The funding will be provided to purchase cleaning supplies (including hand sanitizers), operationalize enhanced cleaning in schools and on school buses, hiring additional custodial staff and/or paying for staff overtime due to additional cleaning.

**\$343,767****TPA 2 - Schedule B - Additional Mental Health Supports**

The funding is to be used to proactively support the mental health and well-being of all students and can be used to:

- retain and/or hire school-based mental health professionals to meet the anticipated increased need associated with the COVID-19 pandemic;
- provide educators and other school staff with professional learning regarding their role in everyday student mental health and well-being as well as the broader system of mental health care;
- design, develop and deliver school-based mental health programs, supports, and communications materials for students, parents, and families based on local need; and/or
- work collaboratively with the community children and youth mental health sector and health care sector to enhance and/or create innovative partnerships to support the mental health needs of students and enhance pathways to care.

**\$410,092****TPA 2 - Schedule C - Special Education**

The Recipient will use the one-time Project Funds to support students with special education needs' return to school during the school day. This may include:

- supporting the retention of additional educational staff to support students with special education needs (e.g., special education resource teachers, educational assistants);
- supporting the retention of additional professional/paraprofessional staff (e.g., speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, child and youth workers);
- supporting the purchase of resources to support learning for students with special education needs (e.g. assistive technology);
- provision of professional assessments; and
- provision of evidence-based programs or interventions that address learning gaps for students with special education needs (e.g. purchasing costs for licences and software such as Empower and Fast ForWord and/or training of educators on those programs/interventions).

**2020-21 Priorities and Partnerships Fund Grants for COVID Purposes****Grant Descriptions**

Finance-20201105-KG

**TPA 3 - Project B1-Additional Custodial Staff** **\$1,816,446**

The funding will allow school boards to hire additional custodial staff to provide a safe and healthy school environment for students, teachers and staff in response to the COVID-19 Outbreak.

**TPA 3 - Project B2-Health and Safety Training for Casual Staff** **\$369,988**

The funding is to be used to provide health and safety training for occasional teachers and casual workers and may also be used to cover the purchase of training materials or other costs related to delivering the training.

**TPA 3 - Project B3 (i)-Additional Teachers** **\$1,301,325**

The funding is to support the hiring of additional teaching staff to support the school board's health and safety response to school reopening. Its use may relieve pressures related to supervision, achieving smaller class size or increased physical distancing, and other safety measures in response to the COVID-19 Outbreak.

**TPA 3 - Project B4-Remote Learning** **\$552,323**

School boards hire additional staff (principals, vice-principals, other administrative support) to support remote learning.

**TPA 3 - Project B5-Additional Non-Permanent Teachers** **\$2,147,532**

This one-time funding is for non-permanent teachers and supply teachers. The funding should be used for time-limited positions. Its use may relieve pressures related to supervision, achieving smaller class size or increased physical distancing, and other safety measures in response to the COVID-19 Outbreak.

**TPA 3 - Project B6-Additional Funding for Remote Learning** **\$1,089,445**

Additional one-time funding of up to \$36 million for the 2020-21 school year for the hiring of more principals, vice-principals, and school administration staff to support remote learning.

**TPA 3 - Project B7-School Reopening Emerging Issues** **\$3,242,261**

This one-time funding is to be used during the 2020-21 school year to augment the health and safety of school reopening plans. The funding is designed to be responsive to varying local issues and may be used to support a broad range of activities such as additional hiring of staff (such as custodians and other school-based staff), leasing of community-based spaces, improving air quality and additional technology and broadband supports.

*School boards must exhaust the targeted funding allocated for the safe reopening of schools prior to allocating eligible expenses to this project (B7).*

**2020-21 Priorities and Partnerships Fund Grants for COVID Purposes****Grant Descriptions**

Finance-20201105-KG

**TPA 3 - Project B8-Funding for High Priority Areas****\$2,801,382**

This funding must be used to support higher risk communities through the following measures:

- providing increased distancing between students through additional classroom hiring supports (i.e. teachers, early childhood educators, and educational assistants) which could lead to reduced class sizes;
- providing increased remote learning supports, including teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants and technological devices for students; and
- supporting enhanced cleaning measures through the hiring of additional custodians.

**TPA 4 - Project B1-Ventilation****\$1,681,500**

The funds are intended to optimize air quality in schools and support healthy and safe learning environments for students and staff. Eligible expenses would include:

- upgrading current air filters to the highest possible MERV and increasing the frequency in which filters are replaced to ensure maximum airflow (filters and installation costs);
- performing recommissioning of current HVAC system to optimize air circulation and pressure, ensuring systems are meeting performance targets; and
- purchasing portable air filtration systems with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters for classrooms that have limited air ventilation/fresh air options.

**TPA 4 - Projects B2 and B3-Transportation****\$1,877,130**

Transportation services are provided by the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA). OSTA may use the funds to support the health and safety of students and drivers for safe and reliable transportation services. Eligible costs include:

- potential pressures/incremental costs associated with:
  - running routes at less than full capacity to allow for physical distancing; and
  - noon-hour or other new bus runs to allow for programmatic choices at the secondary level to allow for appropriate cohorting.
- additional staffing and/or overtime related to enhanced cleaning on school purpose vehicles;
- equipment (e.g., spray guns) and auxiliary supplies that would support effective enhanced cleaning protocols (means of applying the cleaning products that are being supplied by MGCS to be applied in an efficient manner); and
- additional costs associated with specific cleaning and disinfection products or PPE for use on school purpose vehicles that is not being supplied by MGCS.



## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY REPORT**

**September 24, 2020**

**6:00 pm**

**Zoom Meeting**

Voting Members:	Ayan Yusuf Karshe, Nasrin Mirbagheri-Javanfar, Nicki Dunlop, Seema Lamba, Bronwyn Funicello, Carrie-Lynn Barkley, Deepika Grover, Elizabeth Sweeney, Chandonette Johnson-Arowolo (Jaku Konbit), Maria Teresa Garcia (Ottawa Community Immigrant Services (OCISCO), Ryan Doucette (Young Leaders Advisory Council)
Non-Voting Members:	Rob Campbell (Trustee), Chris Ellis (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee, ex officio), Bob Dawson, Edil Adan Ahmed, June Girvan, Yazhou Zhang, Ruth Sword, Sonia Nadon-Campbell (Special Education Advisory Committee), Susan Cowin (Special Education Advisory Committee, Alternate), Inini McHugh (Indigenous Education Advisory Committee)
Staff and Guests:	Justine Bell (Trustee), Joy Liu (Student Trustee), Charles Chen (Student Trustee), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary-Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Jacqueline Lawrence (Equity and Diversity Coordinator), Leigh Fenton (Board Coordinator)

### **1. Welcome**

In the absence of Acting Chair Hayles, Ayan Yusuf Karshe called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. She acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on traditional spiritual and unceded territory of the Algonquin nation, home to the first peoples of Canada. She expressed her honour and gratefulness to share this land with the knowledge keepers. She called for a moment of silence to honour Breonna Taylor in life and in her unjust death.

### **2. Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Seema Lamba,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Ms. Sweeney requested the 'Review of School Resource Officers' be added under item 5.2.

**Moved by Seema Lamba,**

**THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.**

**Carried**

3. Delegations

There were no delegations.

4. Update on the Return to School

Using a Powerpoint presentation, Superintendent Baker presented the District's Return to School Update, noting the following items: models of learning, daily self-assessment, class-size averages, staffing, workload implications, special education support, communications strategies, school councils, reporting outbreak management, and student transportation.

Superintendent Baker acknowledged the tremendous efforts of all employee groups who worked tirelessly to ensure that buildings were safe and schools were ready to open in September. She highlighted that there continues to be challenges with change requests from in-person enrollment into the Ottawa Carleton Virtual (OVC) schools. There are approximately 2000 students who have applied to move to the OVC. She noted that 700 teachers were deployed to OVC. Due to the changing Ministry of Education mandates, the reorganization of schools was completed in three weeks, a process which normally is organized over several months. As the needs of staff and students are considered, further adjustments to workload and instruction are expected.

Students in specialized program classes (SPC) will be included in a hybrid model of learning which will combine in-person and remote learners. The English Literacy Development (ELD) secondary student classes have been congregated in the in-person schools, where the students are in cohorts for intensive language support. The secondary remote learners are being supported by an ELD instructional coach and they may also be able to choose some sheltered content courses to further support their learning. At the elementary level there were additional staffing provisions allowing for classrooms to be congregated. The 11 elementary ELD students, learning through OVC, are attached to peers in their in-person classrooms through the hybrid model.

Superintendent Baker invited Trustees Campbell and Ellis to provide the committee with an update on school councils, as this has been an ongoing conversation at the Committee of the Whole (COW) meetings. Trustee Campbell noted that the Board of Trustees passed a recommendation on 22 September 2020 that OCV parents be allowed to be non-voting members or, where insufficient in-school parent candidates have put themselves forward for



established school council positions, continue to be allowed to be voting or executive members of the school council at their children's home schools. School councils for the new OVC schools will be established; They will continue to play an important role in enhancing the communication between the OCV and the parent community. School council elections are to be conducted in October in accordance with procedure PR 509 SCO, School Council Elections, Constitutions and By-Laws. Trustee Ellis stated that the compromise was recommended by the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) in order to facilitate the opportunity for OVC parents to be connected to their home school.

Superintendent Baker reviewed the information on safety prioritization for the re-opening of schools. All educators have been trained through the 'Employee Health and Safety' program. She has witnessed the conscientiousness of staff and students wearing their personal protective equipment (PPE). Regular emails are sent to families within the District reminding them to perform a daily self-assessment to determine if their child should attend school that day. The Ministry of Education has outlined an elevated level of reporting requirements for students or staff who have tested positive for COVID-19. These individuals are added to a daily 'Do Not Attend' (DNA) list and their names are forwarded to superintendents of instruction,, the Associate Director of Education and the Ministry of Education. The home page of the District website features a COVID-19 Dashboard, detailing the total number of cases for both students and staff, along with closed cohorts, classes and schools. During the presentation and in response to questions, the following points were noted:

- Being one of the first languages in Canada, Inuktitut should be included as a language of translation when circulating materials on instructions for self-assessment. Superintendent Baker noted that she has been in contact with Ottawa Public Health (OPH) to address this gap;
- The prioritization of smaller class sizes in some schools was a decision made in conjunction with OPH because in specific areas of the city the transmission rates of COVID-19 are increasing. These class sizes are, on average, kept below 20 students;
- The District is following the OPH guidelines using the screening tools for the students attending school or child care;
- Communication is expected from the District outlining when students can apply to change to remote or in-person learning;
- Every teacher in the "brick and mortar schools" also has a virtual learning portal in place for those students who have been sent home for a period of quarantine;
- Newcomer families require extra resources to explain the curriculum by grade and subject to support their children at home. Many of these people moved to Canada specifically to improve the education of their children

however, in the current pandemic, are facing disruption in their child's education attainment;

- It was suggested a central repository be implemented, by grade level, for the best videos and on-line lessons that were developed for The Learn at Home Program last spring;
- The Human Resources department continue to recruit occasional teachers to ensure that ample coverage;
- Public Health Nurses are in place at school sites provide support to students and staff.

## 5. Discussion Items

### 5.1 Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap

Superintendent Baker thanked the committee for their input and contributions to the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap (Roadmap). The final version will be presented to the COW on 13 October 2020.

Diversity Coordinator Lawrence reported that by referring to the feedback from the last meeting, enriching changes were made to the Roadmap, such as placing the support for the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent at the beginning of the document. Specific milestones set the expectation for implementation over the next three years. Progress will be monitored through cyclical quantitative and qualitative measurement structures aligned with the reporting structure of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. Specifically, the District is creating a 'scorecard' that will establish accountability measures and reports on progress towards goals identified in the Roadmap, disaggregated by grade, Indigeneity, race, language, disability, sex, gender, and socio-economic status.

Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner invited the committee to share any further thoughts to better serve the students who have been historically underserved. Student Trustee Liu announced that the Student Senate has suggested the development of a mechanism, apart from a school administration based mechanism, to report racist incidents and identity-based bullying occurring on school property. Advisor Tanner responded that a human rights policy, currently in development, will include a complaint procedure. The District has processes to manage human rights issues, like discrimination or racism, however, these are contained within other procedures rather than in a free-standing document. The current goal is to develop an overarching human rights policy that will touch on standards of behavior, particularly around groups that are protected within the Human Rights Code on race-related or gender-related grounds. Included in the policy will be accommodations for people based on those grounds and how to address complaints in relation to those grounds. The development of the policy will be collaborative and consultative.

Mr. McHugh noted the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) put forth calls to action for Canadians to repair the relationship with Indigenous peoples. He strongly suggested that the TRC be highlighted more prominently in the Roadmap. Superintendent Baker agreed to feature the TRC at the beginning of the document.

Trustee Campbell endorsed the Roadmap as a step forward for the District and noted his approval of the Securing Accountability section. He commented on the need to have all identities equally richly reflected throughout the document. He noted that at times the language changed from the way people were referred to, wavering between the word “Black and “African, Black and African-Caribbean” (ABC) descent. He requested more clarity on who was consulted for the making of the Roadmap. He pointed out that the key indicators measure pathways and graduation rates but not equally and therefore the scope of measurement and reporting could be further quantified.

Ms. Lamba recommended that parts of the Roadmap be embedded in the Trustee Code of Conduct policy to ensure that trustees are aware of and support current expectations. This policy will address issues of misconduct and detail the associated repercussions. It is important that, in advance of becoming a trustee, the selected candidates have a demonstrated track record of recognizing equity and are committed to anti-racism, decolonization, feminism, disability justice, queer liberation and gender self-determination. She hopes to see senior management and principals consistently use the lens of an elevated standard of social relations. A requirement for hiring people in decision-making positions must include the search for individuals who are well-versed on the subject of nurturing a diverse community.

Diversity Coordinator Lawrence noted her accord with reference to strengthening policies surrounding trustee accountability. She indicated that going forward there will be intentionality around diversity training for staff, not just for promotions within the District, but established as part of a foundational job requirement. Superintendent Baker stated that trustees serve a governance role for the organization. She is confident that the trustees will use the Roadmap to help ensure that the guidelines set within the document are upheld. The trustees are elected by the public to serve their geographic zones throughout Ottawa; they are not employees hired by the District. She added that the current Board of Trustees are committed to enhancing their knowledge in matters of equity and adopting the pillars of progress outlined in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

Ms. Barkley contributed that defining an alphabetical glossary of terms in the introduction of the document is useful for readers.

## 5.2 Discussion on the School Resources Officer (SRO)

Ms. Sweeney introduced the discussion with an inquiry as to whether or not this committee can suggest changes to the wording of the motion that was put

forward and approved at COW 15 September 2020. Secondly, she asked how ACE can participate in the review process of police involvement in schools.

Trustee Campbell responded that unless the trustees at the COW table move another motion to change the wording of the motion, the language cannot be changed. Before the end of October 2020, a plan for the overall review of police involvement in OCSDB schools, including milestone achievements is to be recommended to the Board. In the current motion, there are no instructions for how the consultation with stakeholders should be undertaken or how the reviews are to be organized. He noted that discussions in this evening's meeting present an opportunity to present further input on the matter.

Student Trustee Liu referred to the Safe Schools Protocol as a municipal policy and it identified instances where the notification of police service is mandatory for certain types of incidents in schools. These situations would include: possession of a weapon, including, but not limited to, firearms, use of weapon to cause bodily harm physical, assault, threats of serious injury, including threatening on social media, text messages or email, sexual assault, possession of illegal drugs, trafficking in drugs or weapons, robbery, extortion, hate and/or bias-motivated incidents, gang-related incidents, criminal harassment, possession of an explosive substance, bomb threat and all deaths directly impacting the school community. She noted that any debate would be required to occur around the school policy itself rather than the municipal policy.

Superintendent Farrish, who is responsible for Safe Schools across the District, thanked the committee for the invitation to attend the discussion. She reasoned that her presence at the meeting could allow her to collect the input needed to be able to design the consultation plan. She acknowledged that Advisor Tanner was also working on the initiative to ensure the focus remains on human rights. The direction they plan to take is to hear from the voices that do not necessarily get heard. She offered to respond to further questions, after the meeting, by email.

Trustee Bell highlighted that the District does fund SROs in schools. The allocation of these education funds constituted grounds for the original debate at the Committee of the Whole-Budget meetings over the summer. She noted her confidence in the people overseeing the review and stated that they will afford greater weight to those voices that are traditionally marginalized. She encouraged a 'Do No Harm' approach to the review; requiring consideration over the initial plight of the affected persons and taking steps to avoid any attempt to have witnesses relive their trauma by a testimony.

Trustee Ellis sought more information on the matrix of people to be invited to form an advisory panel or ad hoc committee for the purposes of this review. He recommended that a member of ACE be asked to sit on a panel of this nature. Superintendent Farrish responded that objectives from the community will be

reflected in the style of the review. The District is in the very early stages of contemplating the consultation process. Advisor Tanner volunteered that the purpose of the discussion was to hear from ACE about how to approach a consultation to provide a safe space where people can share perspectives. ACE can provide ideas to elevate and reflect the voices of people who have been most impacted by police involvement in schools.

Ms. Grover suggested the use of a citizen's jury, where a group is formed from citizens to deliberate on an issue of local importance. She has observed that this is a successful way to have conversations about complex, multi-stakeholder issues where there are competing perspectives. The process occurs with the selection of a cohort of 20 people who will then work together in an intensive way by reading the testimonial evidence, policy tools and guidance documents. They hear from both non-traditional and traditional experts, and speak to many other people that they feel will hold specific knowledge and expertise on the topic. They will deliberate and arrive at a thorough recommendation. She offered to share more information with the committee on this deliberative method of public participation.

Chair Yusuf Karshe recommended a special purpose meeting be held to further discuss the consultation plan for police involvement in schools. The committee agreed to come together for another meeting in the following week.

Mr. Dawson suggested that Superintendent Farrish and Advisor Tanner facilitate the second meeting by providing a proposed framework of the consultation plan in advance to ensure thoughtful discussion on the issue.

## 6. Review of Advisory Committee on Equity Report

### 6.1 Meeting Report 23 July 2020

**Moved by Carrie-Lynn Barkley,**

**THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity Report of 23 July 2020 be received.**

**Carried**

## 7. Committee Reports

### 7.1 Committee of the Whole

Deferred

## 8. Information

### 8.1 Election Selection Process

Diversity Coordinator Lawrence will send the committee correspondence outlining the election selection process.

8.2 2020-2021 ACE Meeting Schedule

The ACE meeting schedule was distributed as a part of the meeting package for informational purposes.

9. New Business

There was no new business raised.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned the meeting at 8:21 pm.

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Ayan Yusuf Karshe, Acting Chair, Advisory Committee on Equity



## SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Members:	Christine Boothby (Trustee), Rob Campbell (Trustee), Chris Ellis (Trustee), Sonia Nadon-Campbell (Community Representative), Amy Wellings (Community Representative), Susan Cowin (Community Representative), Jim Harris (VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children), Mark Wylie (Down Syndrome Association), Nicole Ullmark (Easter Seals Ontario), Lisa Paterick (VIEWS for the Visually Impaired), Nicole Ullmark (Easter Seals Ontario), Safina Dewshi (Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils), Maggie Mamen (Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton)
Association Representatives (Non- Voting):	Susan Gardner (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation), Connie Allen (Professional Student Services Personnel), Catherine Houlden (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation), Andrew Winchester (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Alternate), Jean Trant (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, SSP)
Staff and Guests:	Justine Bell (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Joy Lui (Student Trustee), Charles Chen (Student Trustee), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Dr. Petra Duschner (Manager of Mental Health and Critical Services), Christine Kessler (System Principal, Learning Support Services), Amy Hannah (System Principal Learning, Support Services), Katheryn Langevin (Supervisor of Psychology), Stacey Kay (Manager, Learning Support Services), Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator), Donna Owens (Delegate)

### 1. Call to Order

Chair Nadon-Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. She acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Territory and thanked the Algonquin people for hosting the meeting on their land.

Chair Nadon-Campbell welcomed Amy Wellings, the new community representative and Andrew Winchester, the alternate representative appointed by the Ottawa-Carleton Secondary Teachers' Federation (OSSTF).

2. Approval of the Agenda

**Moved by Sue Cowin,**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**Carried**

3. Delegations

3.1 Donna Owen Re: Individual Education Plans and the Secondary School Quadmester Model

Ms. Owens noted that for the 2020-2021 school year, the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be issued on 26 October 2020, a timeframe that is just before completion of the first secondary school quadmester on 13 November 2020. An IEP is an important document for students accessing special education supports because it describes accommodations and modifications to access the curriculum. She highlighted a concern for Grade 9 students whose needs are least known to staff in their new schools. She requested that Learning Support Services (LSS) establish the IEPs at an earlier date, prioritizing secondary students.

Ms. Dlouhy requested information on the legislated timeline for issuing IEPs. Superintendent Symmonds replied that the timelines are set in legislation through Ministry of Education Regulation 181/98, "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils". Principals are required to ensure that an IEP is developed for each student who has been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). In addition, an IEP may also be prepared for students who require accommodations, program modifications and/or alternative programs. In both cases, the IEP is required to be developed within 30 school days of the student's placement in a special education program. He noted there has been a delay as all timelines were impacted as a part of the COVID-19 emergency order in the province. This order was removed on 14 September 2020. A 30 day count into the 2020-2021 school year calendar arrived at the date of 26 October 2020. He advised that many transition meetings occurred in intermediate schools and the receiving secondary schools. Grade 9 teachers have access to the IEP Online (IOL) platform and, from the beginning of the year, have maintained the accommodations, modifications and alternative curriculum expectations.

Trustee Boothby queried the likelihood of teacher's awareness of a particular student's IEP if the IEPs have not yet been formalized. Superintendent Symmonds noted that each teacher refers to the class list where a previous IEP is specified for an individual student. Teachers then examine the student's current course enrollment and provide the suitable accommodations and modifications, as appropriate, to support students.

In response to a query from Mr. Harris, Superintendent Symmonds responded that he does not anticipate technical challenges moving forward as students are settled into their mode of learning. As with in-person learning, teachers will update and share IEPs as necessary.

4. Review of Special Education Advisory Committee Report

4.1 9 September 2020

**Moved by Sue Cowin,**

**THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee Report dated 9 September 2020 be received.**



## Carried

### 5. Presentations

#### 5.1 Report 20-053, Indigenous, Human Rights and Equity Roadmap 2020-2023

Your committee had before it Report 20-053, providing the foundation for the introduction of the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023 (Roadmap). Superintendent Baker reported that the document sets the direction in identifying and addressing systemic barriers that impact equitable access, opportunity and outcomes for underserved students and staff. The Roadmap operationalizes many of the priorities identified in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan and outlines the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities at all levels of the organization in serving students, parents, staff and community.

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

- The Roadmap is aligned with the goals outlined in the District's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan;
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada Calls to Action, specifically the 'Education for Reconciliation' portion of the TRC, are embedded in the Roadmap;
- Support for the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent is stated at the beginning of the Roadmap;
- In 2020, with the launch of the Identity Based Data Collection Project - *Valuing Voices: Identity Matters*, it was possible to specifically identify systemic barriers that exist and foster plans to address disproportionate access, opportunity and outcomes for Indigenous, Black, minoritized, 2SLGBTQ and special education students. These plans include the need for heightened staff awareness, increased representation of minoritized and racialized identities in the faculty and capacity building to develop the organization's strength to support all students;
- In the Roadmap, particular attention was placed on describing the identity of students served and the various school communities engaging in public education;
- The Roadmap cultivates the practice of accountability by outlining specific actions, reports, and communication structures by which to measure progress in the areas of governance and leadership with transparency;
- In the creation of the Roadmap and in consultation with LSS, the challenges associated with program pathways were identified. One of the goals for programming and support for students is to develop and implement a District inquiry in select schools to address equitable access, opportunities, learning, and outcomes: Student Achievement Through Inquiry (SATE);

- Trustee Ellis noted the intersectionality that is evidenced in students accessing special education, creating overlapping systems of discrimination and disadvantage. The gifted exceptionality is generally underrepresented in marginalized communities whereas the behavioural exceptionality tends to be overrepresented. The story of human rights as it relates to special needs is lacking. He suggested in a future version of the document that this distinction be captured;
- Superintendent Symmonds highlighted that disability, as it relates to human rights, is protected under the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Established in Canada are extensive Ministry of Education regulations and policy/program memoranda (PPMs) as they relate to special education. These existing documents set out a standard that school boards are expected to meet or a directive with which they must comply. LSS submitted input into development of the Roadmap at various opportunities; and
- While the Indigenous and Black perspectives are highlighted in the Roadmap, the history of minoritized students, including special education students, are described in the portion of the document which promotes the student profile served by the District.

## 6. Matters for Action

### 6.1 Appointment of a Representative for the Committee of Whole Meeting

Chair Nadon-Campbell reminded the voting members that a SEAC representative for the Committee of the Whole remains vacant and requires a volunteer.

## 7. Department Update

### 7.1 Superintendent's Report

#### a. Memo 20-126 Re-opening Plans for Special Education Delivery

Your committee had before it Memo 20-126, describing the delivery of special education programs, particularly specialized program classes (SPC). Superintendent Symmonds stated that the principals of every school continue to be updated on expectations surrounding the delivery model. He reported that students and staff are on a growth pathway and are demonstrating greater comfort levels with the structure of the classrooms. LSS continues to offer resources to assist educators in delivering the best programs possible for students. Virtual learning is a new realm and staff is experimenting with innovative ways to successfully teach online. A network of teachers is sharing best practices and technology tips related to meeting the needs of students in the blended model. Teachers are becoming increasingly comfortable with Learning Management Systems (LMS). Additional technology purchases include cameras and Bluetooth headsets to help facilitate communication with virtual learners for the SPCs. These will be distributed shortly, along with guidelines around their use. Issues related to replacing absent staff continue to be a challenge faced by the District.

Ms. Houlden recognized that there is no manual to support and deliver programming to special education learners during these unprecedented times. LSS, teachers, Education Assistants (EAs) and families are all doing their very best to ensure students receive the

best education possible whether the choice has been made to attend school in-person or remotely.

In order to provide informed input, secondary school specialized program class teachers were independently surveyed by Ms. Houlden to gain insight about their experience with the blended model. They have strong, caring relationships with not only students but also their families. Almost all parents and guardians have been patient and understanding as the school community tries to navigate through this together and for that the teachers are grateful.

Unlike their regular program counterparts, the students in the blended model system classes are not receiving the same educational support and access to qualified teacher instruction. From the feedback in the survey the claims are that there is a vast difference in access to synchronous learning in specialized program classes throughout the Board:

- Sites with larger numbers of system class students have been able to adjust timetables/programming to avoid the blended model. Teachers at those sites are able to deliver appropriate programming and meet the needs of both their in-person and virtual students;
- Schools with fewer system classes are set-up to use the blended model and despite teachers and EAs using their lunches, preparatory and personal time, the same level of support and instruction time is unmanageable; and
- System classes for students with greater independence challenges (Dual Support Program (DSP), General Learning Program (GLP) and Developmental Disabilities Program (Semi-Integrated DDP) are not able to adequately access their learning with the limited support available through the blended model.

Ms. Houlden expressed the view that the hybrid model is resulting in an inequity of instruction and learning support for some of the highest needs students. She would like to see more support and guidance from LSS to work towards greater equity across the system. Also, additional staffing and resources are required at sites which use the hybrid model in order to ensure system class students receive equal access to qualified teacher instruction, as do regular program students.

Superintendent Symmonds responded that he and his team are aware that some classroom educators struggle with the blended model. The teaching support staff allocation at the classroom level remained the same as in years previous, despite some of those classes having fewer students from those families who had opted for a remote learning environment. The blended model has been selected by several other school boards across the province. LSS is continually increasing capacity to meet the needs of those students. He empathized with the challenge of working under a new model; however, advantages exist with transitions from remote learning back to in-person with the caring, compassionate educators with whom the students have developed relationships. He acknowledged that it will take increased capacity to continue to grow and to deliver a comprehensive program for those students.

Trustee Ellis requested that Ms. Houlden relay to her colleagues, the appreciation from trustees and senior staff for their efforts in designing a viable support system for these special education students. He noted that a recommendation to the Board could come from SEAC should additional resources be required.

Trustee Boothby reflected on the additional burden on teachers. She requested clarification on the protocol for central administration to connect with the teachers and principals to collectively decide on additional forms of support, both technological and for mental health, during the roll-out of a completely new style of instruction. Superintendent Symmonds responded that System Principals regularly connect with secondary principals to receive feedback and identify areas requiring further support. Learning Support Consultants (LSC) are tied to each of the specialized program class areas. They have organized support networks and resource libraries for the hybrid model. There is a separate LSS team that is responsible for Specialized Equipment Amount (SEA) technology. He recognized that the blended model is in the implementation phase and LSS is focusing all of their efforts into making the model a success moving forward.

In response to a query by Trustee Boothby, Superintendent Symmonds noted that LSS is preparing for a potential increase in virtual learners should families decide to switch to remote learning amid the increase in positive cases of COVID-19. Staff are exercising caution at overloading the virtual classrooms.

In response to a query by Ms. Cowin, Superintendent Symmonds committed to follow-up with Jack Donohue Public School in regards to the Learning Resource Teacher (LRT) support for special education virtual students.

Trustee Campbell sought further comment from LSS on Ms. Houlden's statement that many educators are working beyond the confines of a normal working day to accommodate the demands of a hybrid model. Superintendent Symmonds noted that some teachers are putting in extra time to support their students with special needs in the blended model. He hoped that this would not be a long term occurrence as educators gain confidence and capacity in working in this model. He noted that a Back to School in Virtual Learning Survey was sent to the entire school community, seeking input on identifying opportunities to better support students. Staff is awaiting the analysis of these results to better understand some of the common challenges. Trustee Campbell stipulated that the added imposition on staff required a timely resolution.

Ms. Allen highlighted that LSS has provided as much support as possible in the elementary special education program classes including increasing support from speech language pathologists who are visiting multiple schools and working virtually with remote learners.

Ms. Gardener stated that she was pleased that the Back to School Survey was launched. She noted that the comments Ms. Houlden put forth were aligned with feedback from elementary school teachers. She reiterated that teachers are experiencing a great amount of stress at this time and she is concerned with the mental health balance in the teaching community. Teachers are neglecting their preparatory time because there is not adequate coverage. She does not agree that there is enough funding and support in place to serve children adequately. She questioned the use of the phrase "innovate practices" in the current model of instruction when ultimately there is a requirement for more educators to assist with the workload.

Superintendent Symmonds concurred that there is a tremendous amount of stress in the education system of today and it is a challenge to develop new practices and different approaches. LSS, along with Business and Learning Technologies (B and LT) are continually creating resources to try to support educators in delivering programs for students both in the regular program and in special education programs. Itinerant Teachers of Assistive Technology (ITATs) and LSCs provide additional support. A wide variety of

professional support staff, in areas of psychology, social work or speech language pathology, is employed to help assist staff members in meeting the needs of students. Teacher innovations continue to emerge. He visited an Learning Disabilities Specialized Intervention Program (LD SIP) class where teachers are streaming the lessons for remote learners. They are awaiting Bluetooth headsets so that they can communicate seamlessly with the remote learners via Google Meet. Elementary teachers are using Google sites to support learners and finding creative ways to ensure that they are engaged and that families are well supported. He submitted that the blended model is both unique and unfamiliar and LSS is working to build capacity to spread awareness of best practice and to help people understand that there are different ways to approach instruction and make pedagogical decisions in meeting the needs of those remote learners.

A discussion ensued about the necessity to examine the data presented in the findings of the Back to School survey to determine if there is ample support to make a recommendation to the Board for additional resources.

b. Other Matters

System Principal Kessler reported that the Empower Reading Program has commenced for in-person students. There have been significant challenges as a result of the reorganization. One of the first steps was to determine the location of the Empower trained teachers and reassess training needs for the fall. Training and mentoring obligations are clearly stated in the Memorandum of Agreement with The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto (SickKids) and monitored jointly by SickKids and the District's Empower Reading program coordinator. Some students were unable to finish the Empower program last year as a result of the provincial closure of schools. SickKids developed additional resources to provide a review for those students to help them complete the program. In response to a query by Ms. Houlden, System Principal Kessler explained that there are a number of assessment tools that SickKids provides as well as in-school assessments, should a concern be raised about the level of achievement attained in the remote learning setting. Every school that has an Empower-trained teacher has access to Sick Kids mentor coaches who are experts in helping to assess students on the need for re-teaching.

System Principal Hannah provided an update on SEA. The new SEA application process is in the roll-out phase and 37 applications have been received and processed from across the District. The process is proving to be a significantly faster way to obtain the necessary equipment. She reported that 62 of the SEA claims equipment (physical equipment) had been moved into the requesting schools. LSS is continuing to respond to schools confirming any missing SEA technology equipment. These pieces are being replenished for school sites. The ITATs have been training the students and staff in the in-person schools and with the Ottawa Carleton Virtual (OCV) schools in kindergarten to grade 12.

Trustee Ellis sought confirmation that SEA is funded by the province to provide equipment to those students identified to meet certain criteria. System Principal Hannah indicated that the definition was correct, noting the criteria is that the equipment be deemed essential for students to access the curriculum. There is an application process for both technological and claims. Equipment ranges from a standing frame to a device enabling the student to communicate with eye gaze technology.

Manager Kay reported that though there has been extensive media coverage about some of the challenges Ottawa Student Transport Authority (OSTA) is facing with respect to the yellow school bus driver shortage. The District has been fortunate in that the driver shortage has not affected small vehicle transportation at this time. OSTA is working with their providers and has been able to meet the demands of students who access specialized transportation.

Dr. Duschner acknowledged the diligence of education staff and the professionalism as they welcome back students. The educators are working hard to develop relationships with students which build trust and feelings of safety. Many students are settling well and are happy to be back at school. From a mental health perspective, she reported that LSS has been successful in recruitment for the areas of psychology and social work. The District is at a full staff complement which means that psychology and social work staff is assigned to each of the schools sites. They have been busily meeting with their schools to identify student needs and develop plans in terms of how best to support students. A challenge is the novelty of the OCV and work with the administrators is ongoing to determine virtual support. She noted that the District is concerned that there are students who are not attending school. Ways to re-engage these students are being thoroughly considered.

Superintendent Symmonds thanked the members of LSS for their updates and for the time they are investing to support the entire District. He reported that in an announcement by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) received 7 October 2020, The Right to Read Inquiry is in the data analysis phase. Due to the disruption caused by the pandemic, the final report is planned for spring of 2021. As October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month and Dyslexia Awareness Month, the OHRC plans to release a short video.

He noted the Back to School Survey intends to gather feedback from students, parents, guardians and staff in all modes of learning, in person or virtual. The exercise is part of PPM No. 164 that provided monitoring and evaluation parameters around the delivery of remote learning. The responses will assist the District to improve and enhance service delivery to support students and learning. The survey is open until 16 October 2020 and it is accessible from the home page of the District webpage.

## 7.2 Special Education Plan (Standards)

### a. Transportation

Manager Kay reported that she has reviewed the requirements of the Transportation Standard and the document fulfills the requirements of the standard and is relevant to current practices in specialized and accessible transportation. OSTA provides the District's transportation services and the standard makes reference to their website, which provides the policies and procedures that govern the work that OSTA does to serve and provide transportation for the students. The Transportation Standard meets the requirements at both the federal and provincial level.

She noted one change on the second page of the standard, third paragraph reads, "The Board provides transportation for special needs students enrolled in the Summer Learning Program or Care and Treatment (CTCC) programs, also known as Section 23 programs. The use of Section 23 programs will be removed as it is a dated reference.

Trustee Campbell commented that locating and sourcing the assertions in the standard may be not only useful but necessary as they no longer exist in either the procedure or policy regarding transportation, as District transportation policies is obsolete. Further clarity as to where to find the source documents and to read the statements in context may be important for parents who wish to fully understand their rights and recourse details. He advised noting explicitly that all transportation policy making authority has been delegated to OSTA. Manager Kay noted that she will research the explicit references on OSTA's website.

## 8. Committee Reports

### 8.1 Advisory Committee on Equity

A representative was unable to attend the ACE meeting on 24 September 2020.

### 8.2 Indigenous Education Advisory Council

As the newly-appointed Indigenous Education Advisory Council representative, Chair Nadon-Campbell plans to attend the next meeting on 22 October 2020.

### 8.3 Parent Involvement Committee

The representative was unable to attend the PIC meeting on 21 September 2020.

### 8.4 Committee of the Whole

There is a current vacancy for a Committee of the Whole representative.

### 8.5 Extended Day and Child Care Program

The first Extended Day and Child Care Program meeting of the 2020-2021 school year is scheduled for 12 November 2020.

### 8.6 Board

The representative was unable to attend the Board meeting on 22 September 2020.

## 9. New Business

There was no new business raised.

## 10. Adjournment

Chair Nadon-Campbell stated that further specific feedback on any of the subjects discussed can be sent via email to both her and Superintendent Symmonds.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

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Sonia Nadon-Campbell, Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee







## PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Members: Mostafizur Khan, Diana Mills, Malaka Hendela (OCASC Member), Martyn Reid (OCASC Member), Amber Labelle (OCASC, Alternate), Kahmaria Pingue

Non-Voting Members: Wendy Hough (Trustee), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Sarah Pope (Principal, Castlefrank Elementary School)

Staff and Guests: Dr. Vera Etches (Medical Officer of Health, Ottawa Public Health), Dr. Marino Francispillai (Program Manager, Ottawa Public Health), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Justine Bell (Trustee), Christine Boothby (Trustee), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications), Andrea Rahim (Strategic Business Analyst), Nancy Solange Dean, Lynda Hinch, Natalie Lair, Susan Johnston, Carolyn Kropp, Tasha Truant, Carolina Suarez, Nicole Guthrie (Manager of Board Services), Rebecca Grandis (Senior Board/Committee Coordinator), Darren Gatley (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Chair Khan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Ms. Pingue,**

**THAT the agenda be approved,**

**Carried**

3. Guest Speaker- Dr. Vera Etches, Ottawa Public Health

Chair Khan introduced guest speaker, Ottawa Public Health (OPH) Medical Officer of Health Dr. Vera Etches.

Dr. Etches expressed the importance of OPH connecting with parents and members of the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) to gather input from a school community perspective on COVID-19 management.

During Dr. Etches presentation on the work of OPH, the following points were noted:

- the goals are first to minimize COVID-19 related deaths and hospitalizations, as well as allowing hospitals to catch up on surgeries and to address other health needs and to minimize societal interruption on families work, income and mental health;
- COVID-19 cases are rising in Ottawa with more outbreaks across communities, hospitals, long-term care and retirement homes, schools, group homes, and congregated care settings;
- In almost 300 schools in Ottawa, there have been 21 outbreaks, with 10 still active. However, Dr. Etches noted that the low number of outbreaks is attributed to schools taking the proper precautions and working closely with OPH to establish best practices;
- 45 nurses have been hired to help manage COVID-19 measures in schools;
- a team has been implemented to manage information and data flow to streamline communications;
- OPH recognized the barriers to booking tests. Phone lines have been setup for families to call and book COVID-19 testing appointments;
- Anyone that tests positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate;
- OPH works closely with principals to help identify any potential close or high-risk contacts as part of their investigation within 24 hours of a positive case to the school community;
- Families can help the process by ensuring contact information is up to date;
- Dr. Etches reminded members that wearing masks and maintaining two meters of distance is the most effective means to stop transmission; and
- Prevention measures are essential as screening is not perfect;

During the question period, the following points were noted:

- School Councils could provide a platform for sharing information to parents. Dr. Etches noted that OPH could provide a list of information that underlines key messages to reach out to parents weekly;
- OPH will continue to look at providing information in multiple languages;
- Dr. Etches noted that when children are sent for COVID-19 testing, only 2% of them test positive, which is why schools are not sending the entire class home if a student has symptoms. Symptomatic students are sent home to self-isolate and OPH will confirm a positive case and notify any contacts;

- Dr. Etches noted that once a COVID-19 vaccine is available, it will not likely be mandatory. The COVID-19 vaccine model will be based on the influenza model for distribution with a focus on either the elderly or students;
- Schools will not likely become public vaccination sites as that may encourage large gatherings;
- Surfaces are not the primary source of transmission but rather contact in enclosed spaces (i.e., coughing and singing);
- Members expressed concern that play structures and outdoor classrooms are not in use. Dr. Etches recommended that high traffic contact areas such as those require frequent cleaning and that has to be considered in terms of usage;
- Mr. Reid noted that the District has invested in outdoor classrooms that are not in use and requested that staff investigate the matter;
- Parents noted that children could use age-appropriate materials to learn and understand COVID-19 and how it affects them. Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) has information on their website and Facebook page and would welcome OPH to add any educational material they feel appropriate;
- Current cold and flu season has many students with symptoms being sent home for isolation and the tiered symptom flowcharts on the OCDSB website are helpful;
- Dr. Etches noted that formal OPH testing sites are an ideal way to get tested; however, OPH is working on alternative testing sites for those with limited transportation options;
- OPH is working with community leaders where there are higher transmission rates to determine how to advertise different testing options in those areas. OPH works closely with local community health centres and is working on arranging transportation to community health centres;
- New technology in COVID-19 testing such as the “spit test” could help reduce barriers for those that need testing where the sample could be mailed or picked up; however, decisions by the federal government have delayed the distribution of these tests;
- Dr. Etches noted that portable testing centres were not as successful as expected when introduced in August. Members noted that now children are back in school, the community mindset has changed and recommended that OPH reintroduce portable testing centres to ensure parents can have their children tested with reduced barriers;

- Dr. Etches noted that OPH is working to further reduce barriers by providing pathways for primary care providers to conduct COVID-19 testing;
- Children from kindergarten to grade 3 are still not required to wear a mask, but it is encouraged if they can. Recent research has shown that young students are now having an increased rate of mask-wearing that could be attributed to children learning by modeling behaviour of other children wearing masks;
- OPH has been translating information into multiple languages and has focused on communities with higher transmission rates and the languages spoken there. From a diversity perspective, there are also literacy differences and OPH has been working with community leaders and developers that speak a variety of languages to provide different modalities to get information to communities;
- 45 new nurses have been hired and many are from racialized communities. This helps to reduce barriers to communication;
- OPH also communicates directly with communities through Neighbourhood Ambassadors. Youth Ambassadors from the Boys and Girls Club and Crime Prevention Ottawa are already in three neighbourhoods with expansion into a fourth underway; and
- Audio notes from OPH are useful for community members that may have literacy barriers. Partners such as Refugee 613 also help by generating OPH information into video format.

Dr. Etches concluded her presentation with a message of hope. She noted that each person's actions can make a difference and slow down the transmission of COVID-19. She noted that actions such as physical distancing and mask-wearing are driven by care for one another, and examples of this are seen daily. Dr. Etches thanked parents for doing their part and for their valuable feedback.

#### 4. Review of PIC Report, 21 September 2020

Moved by Ms. Mills,

THAT the Parent Involvement Committee Report of 21 September 2020 be received.

In response to a query from Ms. Mills, Ms. Hendela responded that Nancy Dean is affiliated with OCASC as an executive member responsible for communications and is also the Chair of the Arts Advisory Committee.

**Moved by Ms. Mills,**

**THAT the Parent Involvement Committee Report of 21 September 2020 be received.**

## Carried

### 5. Discussion Items

#### 5.a Report 20-082, PIC Brainstorming Session - Reimagining Parent Involvement in 2020

Your committee had before it Report 20-082 to facilitate brainstorm strategies to support parent involvement and school councils in the 2020-2021 school year.

Executive Officer Giroux introduced the report and noted that a range of issues had been discussed in previous PIC meetings, such as the PIC work plan, changes in school councils and Ottawa Carleton Virtual (OCV) schools, safety, and other issues. She noted that a brainstorming session using the Thoughtexchange tool with members was intended to help the committee discuss a range of current issues and could provide the committee with input into plans for 2020-2021.

Strategic Business Analyst, Andrea Rahim, facilitated the Thoughtexchange and noted that the purpose of the exercise is to focus on parent's need to get involved, what school councils may look like this year, and to look at things through an equity lens to overcome barriers for parent involvement. She posed the following question and asked the members to participate in the online activity: Given the uniqueness of the 2020-2021 school year, what can PIC do to support parent involvement and school councils?

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- School council chairs should receive training on the Google Meet application to permit virtual meetings and ensure members are comfortable using the technology;
- Executive Officer Giroux noted that the school council newsletter could include Google Meet “tips” and that further training could be provided as part of the school council training;
- Virtual meetings have reached and engaged an increased number of participants this year;
- A Thoughtexchange could be conducted through the school council newsletter;
- PIC needs to discuss which schools were successful in forming school councils and those that had challenges, to help inform future discussions on the matter and to determine what actions to take;
- Members noted that newcomers to Canada may not be aware of parent engagement and involvement in schools or may not participate

due to other socioeconomic barriers. Newcomers need understand the mechanisms in place to participate;

- School councils need to review membership through an equity lens to ensure parents from all backgrounds understand how to participate and feel welcome, as well as to identify any other equity issues that need to be addressed;
- Members queried if there was an engagement model used by school councils and noted that parents have been actively organizing social media platforms on their own to communicate. Members questioned what PIC can do to connect the parent made model or if the District needs to create its own model;
- Principals should also engage with parents to ensure that communication reflects the existence of school councils and PIC to encourage further parent involvement to include more voices; and
- The Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap will help guide actions by integrating an equity and human rights lens on the District's actions.

The results of the PIC meeting Throughtexchange are attached for reference. (Appendix A)

## 6. Information Items

### 6.a Chair's Report

Chair Khan congratulated Michael Houghton, a Canadian university professor, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in recognition of his discovery of the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV).

Chair Khan noted that education is a partnership and it is important to work together with all levels of partners. He expressed his thanks to Policy Analyst Ms. Abdel Masieh and the PIC Sub-Committee for their input and outreach for new PIC membership and working with community organizations supporting public education by their unique programs and services.

Chair Khan noted his support of a geography project at Cairine Wilson Secondary School entitled: "Let's Talk Geography, Immigration, and Supporting Newcomers." He referred the geography teacher to Immigrant Services, which has 24 multicultural officers with linguistic diversity that supports immigrant families and refugees, as well as the Integration Director of Operations and Outreach Minister's office at the Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada office and other organizations to support the project. He noted that the "Let's talk Geography" project members had a meeting on 9 October 2020 in which students were able

to engage and ask questions of the representatives. He wanted to take the opportunity to share the project with PIC members for any additional feedback.

Chair Khan stressed the importance of good governance, accountability, and transparency. He noted that section 38 (3) of *Regulation 612/00* speaks specifically about PIC elections. He shared that the regulation only permits parent members with a two-year term to stand for election to chair or co-chair.

On a point of order, Ms. Hendela noted that the Chair was introducing new business in his Chair's Report and she stressed that new information should be listed on the agenda to be formally discussed and new business should not be introduced in the form of an update.

Chair Khan disagreed with Ms. Hendela suggesting his update was meant to inform members of the process, their responsibilities, and the rules within *Regulation 612/00*.

Executive Officer Giroux added that PIC would have a report on the November meeting agenda that details the process for elections of the committee and election of the chair.

Chair Khan noted that the last item he wanted to mention in his Chair's Report was that the Ontario PIC Chair's Meeting was considering another virtual meeting and that he will share what was discussed if one is scheduled. He concluded his report.

#### 6.b Director's Report

Associate Director Reynolds reported that OPH has been an invaluable partner in the management of COVID-19. He recognized that parents have been frustrated with some of the safety measures such as equipment not being used, however, with only 70 positive COVID-19 cases with over 60,000 students, safety measures have been effective.

Executive Officer Giroux reported that the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap was introduced to the Committee of the Whole (COW) on 13 October 2020.

Executive Officer Giroux noted that the Back to School Survey had over 16,000 participants using the Thoughtexchange tool. She encouraged members to participate before the survey closes on 16 October 2020.

Executive Officer Giroux noted that the Board appreciated the support and advice from PIC regarding school councils and that Ottawa-Carleton Virtual (OCV) is working on creating school councils. Parents of OCV students can also participate at in-person school councils providing membership vacancy.

#### 6.c OCASC Report

Ms. Hendela reported that OCASC had a special meeting to discuss school council elections and rules. She noted that 39 participants registered for OCASC's first virtual Zoom Meeting. Councils taught each other the "pros and cons" of using virtual meetings. She noted that the Board amendment allowing for two-tiered participation caused some challenges. It did not contemplate the notion of the first meeting with an election meeting and this caused some uncertainty of who would be able to participate formally and councils discussed and strategized on how to remain compliant. She noted that the first official OCASC meeting would be on 15 October 2020.

Ms. Hendela added that a major item of importance to students and parents are the high school clubs. She noted that high school clubs are necessary and provide many benefits to students. She suggested that the Board address this concern as a priority and hoped PIC may discuss this at a future meeting.

Ms. Pingue agreed that high school clubs are important as they teach leadership skills and aid students' mental health. She strongly urged members to discuss this matter in the next PIC meeting.

In response to a query from Mr. Reid about raising this issue at a future meeting, Executive Officer Giroux acknowledged the importance of clubs to student engagement in school, PIC's mandate is to support parent involvement and the Committee might want to privilege its meeting time on issues which directly help parents to be engaged in education.

#### 6.d PIC Correspondence

The PIC Correspondence Register was provided for information.

#### 7. New Business

Ms. Dean noted that the Arts Advisory Committee is seeking new members and that the next meeting would take place on 19 October 2020. She noted that this was another opportunity for parent involvement.

In response to a query from Ms. Hendela, Executive Officer Giroux noted that information on the proposed parent conference and school council training day was included as an appendix to Report 20-082. Executive Officer Giroux noted that she appreciated members' feedback and will ensure there is further discussion on the matter.

#### 8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.



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Mostafizur Khan, Chair, Parent  
Involvement Committee





## AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT (PUBLIC)

Wednesday, October 21, 2020

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Members: Mark Fisher (Trustee), Keith Penny (Trustee), Erik Husband (External Member), Annik Blanchard (External Member)

Staff and Guests: Lynn Scott (Trustee), Justine Bell (Trustee), Camille Williams-Taylor (Director of Education), Michael Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Kevin Gardner (Manager of Financial Services), Sandra Lloyd (Manager of Risk and Supply Chain Management), Genevieve Segu (Regional Internal Audit Manager), Gordon Champagne (Senior Internal Auditor), Rebecca Grandis (Senior Board Coordinator)

### 1. Call to Order

Chair Fisher called the public session to order at 6:04 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Territories and thanked the Algonquin Nations for hosting the meeting on their land.

### 2. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Trustee Penny,**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**Carried**

### 3. Delegations

There were no delegations.

### 4. Superintendent's Report

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Carson advised that the Ontario School Boards' Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) provided an insurance premium refund to the District in the amount of \$200,000. This amount represents approximately 20% of the premiums paid by the District. OSBIE has been successful at keeping administration costs low and is focused on risk and claims management. The refund will be reflected in the financial statements and will provide funding to support further risk management work.

CFO Carson noted that staff continues to work on finalizing the 2019-2020 financial statements. Although there are challenges carrying out some of the audit work while working remotely, CFO Carson is confident that the November timelines for the presentation of the financial statements will be met.

CFO Carson congratulated Manager Sandra Lloyd on her thirty-year association with the OCDSB and the Supply Chain Management Association of Canada.

CFO Carson reported that the District received the approval to proceed with the construction of a new secondary school in the Riverside South area. Of the \$550 million in capital funding to school boards from the province, the OCDSB has received over \$65 million for local projects. The provincial funding for the new secondary school will need to be augmented to complete the construction. Design and Construction staff will apply the experience they have gained from the construction of the new secondary school in Stittsville to plan the new project.

## 5. COVID-19 Update

CFO Carson advised that there have been fewer than 100 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the District since schools reopened. Considering the number of staff and students in District buildings, the measures that have been put in place to limit the spread of the virus are working. Staff shortages continue to be a concern across the province. The District has been able to manage shortages and mitigate school closures.

CFO Carson reported that Regulation 274, Hiring Practices, was recently repealed by the province. It is hoped that the movement away from seniority-based hiring practices may provide more flexibility within the District to hire additional staff. There continue to be staff shortages in occasional teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants and custodians.

Manager Lloyd noted that the province underestimated the cost of supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Acquiring and managing PPE, supplied through the provincial supply chain, has been challenging. The October order for the District, which was comprised of twelve tractor-trailers of supplies, arrived at the end of September. The District does have the capacity to house the supplies in the warehouse, but it was never intended to function as a distribution centre. There continue to be demands for hand sanitizer, gowns and gloves. Staff will continue to monitor the supply chain issues to ensure the District has adequate supplies.

During the question period, the following points were noted:

- Staff have used Ministry funding for enhancement to lower-tier HVAC systems to ensure increased maintenance and more frequent filter changes;
- Ottawa Public Health (OPH) is satisfied with the District process for ventilation monitoring;

- Winter may be problematic in sites where open windows are part of the ventilation system; and
- Staff are looking at leasing or acquiring a backup heating system to employ on short notice if windows must be open in winter.

## 6. Matters for Action

### 6.1 Review of Audit Committee Report

#### a. 23 September 2020

**Moved by Annik Blanchard,**

**THAT the Audit Committee report dated 23 September 2020 be received.**

**Carried**

#### b. Business Arising

There was no business arising.

### 6.2 Report 20-074, 2019-2020 Annual Report on Internal Audit Activity

Your Committee had before it Report 20-074, seeking approval of the annual report to the Board summarizing the work performed by the Regional Internal Audit Team (RIAT), during the 2019-2020 year, in accordance with Regulation 361/10, Audit Committees.

Manager Gardner advised that report is a summary of the work of the RIAT and the plan, approved in September of 2019, proposed two audit engagements; attendance support review and attendance data visualization.

Moved by Trustee Penny,

THAT Appendix A to Report 20-074 be approved as the 2019-2020 Annual Report on Internal Audit Activity.

Follow up procedures were also conducted and reported on past audits. It was confirmed there have not been any enrolment audits planned for this year. Appendix A to Report 20-074 will be shared with the Ministry as required.

**Moved by Trustee Penny,**

**THAT Appendix A to Report 20-074 be approved as the 2019-2020 Annual Report on Internal Audit Activity. (Attached as Appendix A)**

**Carried**

### 6.3 Report 20-075, Audit Committee Annual Report for 2019-2020

Your committee had before it Report 20-075, seeking approval of the 2019-2020 annual report on the work performed by the Audit Committee.

CFO Carson noted that despite the challenges presented during the year, the Audit Committee was able to accomplish a great deal. The work on the Strategic Enterprise Risk Management (SERM) continues. Staff have used a risk-based approach to managing the District's COVID-19 response. It is anticipated that there will be an orientation and training session on the SERM for all trustees and the new external members in the coming year.

Moved by Annik Blanchard,

THAT Report 20-075 be approved as the Audit Committee Annual Report to the Board for 2019-2020.

Chair Scott asked for clarification on the Audit Committee's review of the District's policies for risk assessment and risk management and whether a specific review had been conducted. CFO Carson committed to providing an amendment to the report to indicate the work has not yet begun but is planned.

**Moved by Annik Blanchard,**

**THAT Report 20-075 be approved as the Audit Committee Annual Report to the Board for 2019-2020.**

**Carried**

#### 6.4 2020-2021 Regional Internal Audit Plan (G. Segu)

Regional Internal Audit Manager Segu presented the 2020-2021 Annual Report on Internal Audit Activities for the review and the approval of the Audit Committee.

The plan for 2020-2021, includes the following work:

- the continuation of work initiated in 2019-2020;
- cyclical follow-up procedures;
- a placeholder for Management requests and changing priorities; and
- one new engagement if time allows.

Ms. Segu noted that the plan also includes a new COVID-19 response review. This review would evaluate the District's response to the pandemic and consider opportunities to improve emergency preparedness and crisis management in the future. As well, a review of educational assistant (EAs) deployment has been added to provide management with an assessment of the deployment of EAs and the challenges they face in managing student behaviours.

Moved by Annik Blanchard,

THAT the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Audit Committee Recommends for Approval the 2020-21 Internal Audit Plan as Presented in Appendix 1.

During the discussion about the COVID-19 response review the following points were noted:

- the process for selecting a firm to undertake the work on the COVID-19 response review was determined by the dollar value of the contract as it falls within the sole source threshold;
- MNP was the firm engaged to conduct the COVID-19 response review as they are doing the work across the region and are familiar with the risk profile of school boards;
- the purpose of the COVID-19 response review is to identify gaps and establish an action plan for future emergency preparedness;
- the review should consider the uncertainties boards faced around the timing of announcements and the impact on planning;
- the review will focus on general gaps;
- Trustee Penny expressed concern about the vague description of the review as well as the increased workload this may cause for staff. He noted that the District's COVID-19 response was not planned and is tactical and dynamic;
- CFO Carson expressed concern that it may be too early to conduct a review and that staff will monitor the work to ensure it has value;
- Trustee Fisher noted that the work of the RIAT must be aligned with the external audit work; and
- Ms. Segu noted that she would contemplate areas of review identified as priorities by the District.

**Moved by Annik Blanchard,**

**THAT the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Audit Committee Recommends for Approval the 2020-21 Internal Audit Plan as Presented in Appendix 1.**

**Carried**

7. Matters for Discussion

7.1 2019-2020 Annual Report on (RIAT) Internal Audit Activities (G. Segu)

Your committee had before the report on the 2019-2020 Annual Report on Internal Audit Activities.

The report includes requirements under the regulation, the mandate and the framework. Highlights from the report include the following:

- The mandate defines the purpose of the RIAT and it has not changed since its presentation to the Audit Committee in September of 2019;
- To ensure independence, the RIAT reports functionally to the nine Audit Committees of the Eastern Ontario region and administratively to the Senior Business Official of the host board;
- The RIAT consists of two internal auditors, one senior auditor and one internal audit manager, all are qualified staff with professional designations. The RIAT manager and members complete annual professional development that includes ethics training; and
- The mandate requires the RIAT to perform duties in accordance with the Framework and that internal and external quality assessments be conducted on a periodic basis;

The report included the 2019-2020 plan for the District that included three completed engagements:

- Attendance support review;
- Attendance visualization; and
- Follow-up procedures.

The RIAT presented follow up procedures to the District in the 2019-20 Detailed Status report, to date there are 18 recommendations outstanding. Due to COVID-19, the recommendations have not been updated.

## 8. Information Items

### 8.1 Memo No. 20-117, Regional Internal Audit Team Evaluation Process for 2019-2020

Your Committee had before it Memo 20-117, providing information for the performance evaluation process of the Regional Internal Audit Team (RIAT) for 2019-2020.

CFO Carson urged Committee members to complete the evaluation form and submit their responses to Manager Gardner no later than 30 October 2020. The responses will be compiled and presented at the 23 November 2020 Audit Committee meeting.



## 8.2 Long Range Agenda (Draft Version)

CFO Carson noted that the long range agenda (LRA) contains items for consideration of the Audit Committee for a future meeting. The document was drafted to align with the regulation.

CFO Carson and Trustee Fisher will review the LRA to consider the content of meetings and focus areas in the new year. Members of the Committee will also have an opportunity to provide input into the planning of future meetings.

## 9. New Business

Trustee Fisher advised that the 23 November 2020 meeting would be the last meeting with external members Annik Blanchard and Erik Husband in attendance. Trustee Fisher noted the Committee would welcome their feedback or reflection on any items or structural changes that could be focused on in the future.

## 10. Adjournment

The public meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

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Mark Fisher, Chair, Audit Committee





## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

October 22, 2020

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

**Members:** Albert Dumont, Monique Manatch, Inini McHugh,  
Jennifer Lord, Benny Michaud

**Staff and Guests:** Wendy Hough (Trustee), Jennifer Jennekins (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Justine Bell (Trustee), Joy Lui (Student Trustee), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Michael Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Jody Alexander (Vice-Principal, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education), Charles D'Aoust (Coordinator, Budget Services), Chantel Verner (Indigenous Education Itinerant Teacher), Kareen Butler (Indigenous Education Itinerant Teacher), Kris Meawasige (Indigenous Student Support and Re-engagement Coordinator), Kyl Morrison (Indigenous Graduation Coach), Joe Ross (Science Instructional Coach), Romaine Mitchell, Ali Dusome, Pauline Mousseau, Lili Miller, Katlin Markwell, Keith Sarazin, Azia Seicher-Hamel, Donna Blackburn, and Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator)

### 1. Opening

Elder Albert Dumont opened the meeting.

Vice-Principal Alexander invited the participants of the council meeting to introduce themselves.

### 2. Presentation

#### 2.1 The OCDSB Budget Process Overview and Indigenous Education Funding (M.Carson)

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Carson expressed his gratitude for the invitation to listen to the Council discussions. He shared the budget development process followed to develop a budget. Though a budget is set annually, balancing the funding occurs within a three year period: the year previous, the current year and the following year. A budget is developed based on the resources in place, new

funding that the province is willing to commit to programming and contingency planning for the future of upholding a set standard of education.

Eight years ago the province began to provide specific funding to support Indigenous students and to improve the understanding of Indigenous history, along with current Indigenous issues in Canada. CFO Carson reviewed the pre-circulated memo on the Indigenous Education Funding Allocation. For each student enrolled in the District, the Ministry of Education provides \$12,000 to support the education of that individual student. Funding of \$90- \$100 million dollars is dedicated to supplement the services provided to students accessing special needs. These funds are set aside separately by legislation and may only be used in the designated area. The term “sweatered funding” was explained by CFO Carson; approximately \$750,000 per year is designated funding, strictly to support Indigenous students. A calculation is based on population information found in the Federal Census. The majority of Indigenous students attend provincially funded schools. When the province began to fund Indigenous education they divided the funding into a number of different sections: Indigenous Education Per Pupil Amount, Indigenous Lead funded through Program Leadership Grant, and Board Action Plan on Indigenous Education Allocation. In addition, a growing number of funds are apportioned to the number of secondary students who have chosen to enrol in Indigenous Studies Courses. In total, \$3,000,000 in funding is generated through the Indigenous Education allocation, and from that amount, \$1,300,000 is directed specifically towards supporting Indigenous students by employing permanent Indigenous staff and training resources for non-Indigenous staff. A major achievement in the creation of Indigenous studies classes is that all students have a better understanding of the nation’s history and the history that occurred long before the settlers arrived in Canada.

CFO Carson reported that part of the annual budget exercise is to meet with various departments to review current practices and determine which initiatives are identified as priorities. Senior staff meets as a collective to discuss in-year strategies derived from the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. From there determinations are made to support initiatives and compromises are decided upon based on the funds available to execute new ideas.

CFO Carson welcomed suggestions on areas that the Council believes requires more attention in education or if there are programs that may benefit from being accelerated in the planning process.

In response to questions and comments, the following points were noted:

- Additional education assistants (EAs) are required to be in assigned classrooms on a consistent basis in order to serve the needs of special needs students, like children in care and others with severe learning disabilities stemming from fetal alcohol syndrome. CFO Carson responded that an ongoing challenge the District confronts is the need to provide

additional supports in classrooms. In the last two years 100 EAs have been added across the school sites, increasing the staff complement by 20%. This allocation of EAs is managed by the Learning Support Services (LSS) Department in consultation with school principals and the superintendents of instruction. Superintendent Baker noted that in discussions with LSS, she has promoted the advancement of Indigenous EAs who may connect with students using culturally relevant knowledge. There is a plan in place for specific support of this nature;

- Establish a section in the budget that specifically identifies Indigenous Education. Expand on this piece to breakdown the costs involved in Indigenous Education to enable a greater understanding of expenditures;
- Hire additional Indigenous graduation coaches;
- Structure the Indigenous Education Team similarly to the way the LSS Department is staffed, including a physiologist, a mental health worker, and a social worker;
- An inquiry was made as to how many Indigenous students in the District access a special needs program. CFO Carson responded that the information may be available in the results of the 2020 Valuing Voices Survey which will be shared by the Research, Evaluation and Analytics Division later in the 2020-2021 school year; and
- Put transition support in place for students who move from Nunavut into the Ontario schooling system. They often have a significant disadvantage in their English comprehension abilities. Superintendent Baker noted that Mr. Meawasige, who works with Indigenous students on re-engagement, brings many community leaders together in support of this issue.

Mr. Meawasige provided an overview of the history of the Indigenous student supports, which advanced from the year 2016 under the guidance of Ms. Nancy Henry. A hiring sequence of Indigenous staff brought forth the establishment of an Indigenous Education Team. Today they have begun work in collaboration with LSS with a newly appointed part-time Indigenous social worker, Courtney Valeyev. Mr. Meawasige's role is to provide cultural and academic support to Indigenous students in kindergarten to grade 12. He is rewarded through the time he invests with the young people and their families. Building these relationships fosters trust. Educators today are working within an education system that has not benefitted the Indigenous people in the past and therefore one of the most important elements of the work is to continue to grow trusting relationships. Once the trust is stable, only then can momentum build to assist the student on their education journey and advocate for their increased opportunities within the system. Through empowerment, the student finds their voice and realizes their potential. The education system was not constructed to understand the Indigenous ways of knowing; part of the work of the Indigenous Education Team is to help the system understand Indigenous culture and suggest changes to the system to support the students.

Ms. Nadon-Campbell queried whether there was any community outreach to Makonsag, and Indigenous preschool program that fosters cultural awareness and early learning for children and their families. Mr. Meawasige reported that early in his career with the District, there were valuable meetings with Makonsag to work together on transitions and to highlight the work of the Indigenous Education Team. Over the years there has been staff succession in leadership at Makonsag, however they are hopeful that a working relationship can be re-established.

Ms. Nadon-Campbell requested clarification on the role that the Indigenous Education Team plays in assessment testing for Indigenous students who may benefit from special education support. Mr. Meawasige volunteered that, in his own experience, should a parent or guardian raise a specific concern, they are able to help navigate the process with the family, as the experience may be overwhelming or confusing. Mr. McHugh contributed that under the Child First Initiative, Inuit children, from the time they are born until they become the age of 17, are ensured access to health, social and educational services and supports, including mental health assessments, under the Canadian Government. He suggested employing Indigenous psychologists to complete assessments with Indigenous children.

Vice-Principal Alexander highlighted that her team does a large amount of work with LSS. They have spoken to them about the Child First Initiative and Jordan's Principle, which aims to ensure Indigenous children can access all public services in a way that is reflective of their distinct cultural needs. LSS and the Indigenous Education Team collaborated on professional development sessions in the 2019-2020 school year.

Mr. Meawasige welcomed some new students to the meeting and requested that space be made on the agenda to listen to the voices of the youth. From a request by a student, Superintendent Baker provided a brief overview of the purpose of the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC). The Council has a goal of providing guidance to the Board, as it pertains to Indigenous Education, well-being and achievement and providing support to its Indigenous students, families and educators. The Council collaborates with the District on the development of the Indigenous Education Board Action Plan. Discussions focus on supporting teachers in their learning and engaging the community in partnership and collaboration. Further considerations are given to the use of data and how to support Indigenous students in measuring successes using milestones that appeal to Indigenous ways of learning. She emphasized that students are always at the centre of the conversations and play a role in decision making. It has been students who guide the discussions, present their experiences and share suggestions. Those same ideas are incorporated into the Board Action Plan. Trustee Hough is the appointed trustee to IEAC and she is aware of any recommendations that are made to the Board of Trustees from the Council. Vice-

Principal Alexander offered to have further conversations with the students about their interest in attending IEAC.

A student sought further information on the communication plan between class teachers for the Individual Education Plans (IEPs). A view was expressed that IEP follow-up requires more diligence on the part of teachers, as both this individual and peers are experiencing a lack of one-on-one support and a shortage of EAs in certain courses. Superintendent Baker demonstrated concern that the supports in place were not benefiting the student, as staff has been increased for 2020-2021 in the areas of Learning Support Teachers (LSTs) and Social Workers as a part of the COVID emergency support funding measures. CFO Carson stated that at times there are room for practice improvements that are not related to monetary amounts. He noted that when students and teachers share their experiences the gaps can be identified. Ms. Nadon-Campbell, who sits as the Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), invited the student to appear as a delegate to bring the concern to LSS and the committee dedicated to special education.

Ms. Lord stated that in consideration of the allocations specifically directed towards Indigenous students and special education, perhaps greater support may be provided to these students if there was additional information on how many Indigenous students have an IEP in place. She queried the amount of EAs that are on staff to solely support Indigenous students. If this issue was driven by a needs-based approach, future budgets may be shaped to adequately support these students. Superintendent Baker responded that at the end of a typical school year, an annual Indigenous Education Report is presented to the Committee of the Whole (COW). This document provides an elaborate funding breakdown. She offered to provide the reports from previous years.

A student requested to learn more about the difference between online and in-person schooling for Indigenous students. Superintendent Baker noted that access to technology, WiFi, cultural and academic supports were all areas that posed difficulty in the spring when the province ordered the closure of schools. While the delivery of education underwent a pivot to remote learning practices, challenges and opportunities presented themselves. The solutions continue to evolve. Through 'education hubs', driven by a grant awarded to Inuuqatigitt and the work of Mr. McHugh, Indigenous students can access supplementary online support throughout the week. Mr. McHugh added that online learners have access to their guidance counselor from their home school.

Mr. Meawasige reported that young people are experiencing a change in the way that they relate to their educators due to the switch between the physical spaces. He has heard that there is an impact on students with the strain of using a computer screen for extended periods of time, effecting on both mental and physical well-being. He hopes that there are opportunities for the students to talk about how they are managing in this new learning environment. There are virtual sharing circles run by Josh Lewis, offering support. He urged students to reach

out to the staff in Indigenous Education and community partners in this time of shifting realities.

CFO Carson thanked the council for allowing him and Mr. D'Aoust to join the Council for the presentation and discussion. He offered to return to the Council during the 2020-2021 school year as budget planning develops.

### **3. Community Discussion**

#### **3.1 Report 20-080, Consultation Plan to Review Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools(M.J. Farrish)**

Superintendent Farrish thanked the Council for the opportunity to provide an update on the consultation plan to review police involvement in schools. She explained that when the District reviews a policy, a plan to consult must accompany the plan. She acknowledged IEAC invested a great deal of time in the 25 June 2020 meeting discussing experiences with School Resource Officers (SROs). She noted that the June meeting report will inform the coming review, to assist both her and Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner with insight from IEAC. She described the scope of the review encompassing an overview of the Ministry of Education's directive in The Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol 2015, an overview of the Protocol to Accompany Safe Schools Policies in the City of Ottawa, an overview of District governance documents that stipulate a partnership with Ottawa Police Service (OPS), an assessment of when the administrators are involving the police in schools, and recommendations for the way forward to create schools that are safer for all students. The review will be focusing on intended and unintended outcomes. The exercise includes the creation of a formal report of recommendations to be published and brought forward in the spring of 2021. The release of the report is scheduled ahead of the policy revision.

Superintendent Farrish advised that the engine of change will be the voices heard in the consultation process. The goal is to improve outcomes and experiences of all of our youth, but with a particular focus on the youth and the employee groups that we know are disproportionately represented in negative outcomes as a result of police involvement. It is important that this type of consultation is performed in a way that is respectful. Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner will be supervising engagement with those telling their story to ensure that the commitment to human rights is reserved.

Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner shared that the vision for the consultation is a collaborative process and one where recommendations arise out of the review. The steering group guiding the work should be comprised with a half percentage of student representatives. Other representative would include members of the Advisory Committee on Equity ( ACE) and the IEAC, community members, and parents. This steering group would be engaged throughout the



entire process to ensure the right questions are being asked, the right voices are being heard and all the interpretive information is being considered. She invited the Council to share their perspectives on the plan to consult with the school community.

Mr. McHugh suggested that a counsellor be present in the event that a contributor requires support in the recollection of a traumatic event. Superintendent Farrish recognized that the terminology referring to a “do no harm” approach is perplexing because harm is apparent when this kind of information is sought. A minimal harm pathway is a realistic achievement in this kind of a review. Counselling services were built into the plan, including culturally appropriate supports. Outreach to organizations who specialize in working with youth will be contacted to aid with engagement.

Ms. Manatch expressed an interest to participate in the steering group and requested information on applying. Superintendent Farrish replied that an application process was not being considered at this time, however she acknowledged that a certain number of people are optimal and they will seek to balance perspectives as well. She and Advisor Tanner recommended that the advisory committees of the Board could decide on a representative to come forward to participate in the review.

Ms. Miller queried the likelihood of further recommendations to allocate the funding for SROs in other areas of the District, for instance a youth social worker or a conflict resolution expert. Superintendent Farrish explained that the timing of the review will coincide with the budget deliberation process. This could be a part of a larger budgetary conversation.

In a response to a query by Ms. Miller, Advisor Tanner explained that though she has not conducted a review of this nature in Canada, since the year 2001 she has worked in Uganda and Nepal to consult on changes to legislation to protect human rights, cultivated community engagement and worked with traditional communities to structure a bridge between a formal colonial structure and an existing traditional structure. She reiterated the importance of obtaining the advice from the steering group to build a series of evidence-based recommendations.

Vice-Principal Alexander thanked Superintendent Farrish and Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner for their time and noted that any further comments or guidance can be forwarded to them by email. Vice-Principal Alexander offered to make any connections that the Council may request.

### 3.2 Update on Education Hubs (I. McHugh)

Mr. McHugh thanked the Board for supporting the Inuuqatigitt application for the

educational hubs. These hubs provide added support to Indigenous students with online learning. There are two classrooms wired for virtual support at the Hardini Centre and a third servicing a youth building. Nine teaching positions are available and 20 interviews are scheduled. The positions include three teachers, three EAs and three cultural advisors. Some of these candidates have experience teaching in Nunavut. Registration numbers are high and there are only six spots remaining for the last hub. The goal is to be running the program for students by 9 November 2020.

Trustee Hough mentioned that she had the honour to read and contribute to the application. She was impressed by the written proposal in its entirety. She noted that if other groups wish to move forward with this type of model, they should approach Inuuqatigitt for input.

### 3.3 Council Facilitator

Deferred until 10 December 2020.

## **4. Reports - Deferred**

### 4.1 Superintendent's Report

Deferred until 10 December 2020.

### 4.2 16 January 2020 IEAC Report

The IEAC report of 16 January 2020 was received.

### 4.3 17 September 2020 IEAC Report

The IEAC report of 17 September 2020 was received.

### 4.4 IEAC Action Tracking Log

Deferred until 10 December 2020.

## **5. Information and Invitation**

### 5.1 Report 20-053, Indigenous, Human Rights and Equity Roadmap, 2020-2023

The final version of the Indigenous, Human Rights and Equity Roadmap 2020-2023 was included for information.

## **6. Closing**

Mr. Dumont offered a closing at 8:22 p.m.



**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)**  
**Report No. 20-085**

**10 November 2020**

**Annual Report on Student Suspensions (2019-2020)**

**Key Contact:** Michèle Giroux, Executive Officer, Corporate Services, 613-596-8211 ext. 8310  
 Mary Jane Farrish, Superintendent of Instruction, ext. 8821  
 Dorothy Baker, Superintendent of Instruction, ext. 8886  
 Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of Learning Support Services, ext. 8254

**PURPOSE:**

1. To present the annual report on student suspensions, including findings from analyses undertaken on 2019-2020 OCDSB student suspension data in conjunction with *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey* data to identify:
  - groups of students who may be over/underrepresented in the suspension data based on their Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability; and
  - differences in student suspension rates across groups of students (disparity) based on these same demographic characteristics.

**STRATEGIC LINKS:**

2. The review of suspension and expulsion data is an essential step in the District's commitment to creating a culture of caring and a culture of social responsibility. Our safe schools strategy is built on promoting positive student behavior by building relationships, establishing a code of conduct, ensuring bullying prevention initiatives are in place and employing a progressive discipline approach. Analyzing suspension data informs our safe schools practice, allows an opportunity to assess progressive discipline practices and helps to identify strategies to ensure our practice is bias free. This allows for the establishment of quantifiable estimates of inequities in the education system as it relates to student discipline.

**CONTEXT:**

3. The OCDSB annually reports on student suspension data in accordance with Policy P.026.SCO Student Suspension and Expulsion. This is the first year that the suspension data has been analysed using identity-based data which was

collected last year. Reporting this data in alignment with the requirements under the *Anti-Racism Act* and accompanying *Data Standards* allows for deeper analysis of additional groups of students based on Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability as reported in the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey*. For the benefit of the reader, there are a number of references to and appendices explaining some of the more detailed technical/methodological elements of analysis that are requirements under the provincial Data Standards.

A total of 2,374 suspensions were issued in OCDSB schools in 2019-2020

- 1,305 at the elementary level, and
- 1,069 at the secondary level –

This is almost the same from the previous year. The overall suspension rate based on a student population of 74,854 was 2.2% (similar to the previous two years). Provincial data for last year is not yet available, but the provincial average for the year prior was 2.85%.

For many years, students, parents, and community partners have raised concerns that racialized students, students of diverse gender identities, and students with disabilities are disproportionately represented in the suspension data and often face increased risk of disciplinary action compared to other students. The data supports these concerns and indicates that some student populations are suspended at a disproportionate rate. This information will support the District's work to review current practices related to progressive discipline through the lens of equity and inclusive education and human rights principles and to implement practices that support positive behaviour and bias-free progressive discipline, taking mitigating and other factors into account not only in response to inappropriate behaviour but in all interactions with students along the "continuum of progressive discipline".

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

### Analysis & Reporting of Suspension Data

4. The Ministry of Education collects suspension data for all publicly funded school districts in Ontario. Suspension rates are calculated as a percentage of the October 31 enrolment and include suspensions issued over the full course of the year (i.e., between the first day of school in September and the last day of school in June). At the provincial level, suspension data is disaggregated by panel (elementary, secondary), gender (male, female), and students with special education needs as a whole, not by exceptionality.

Due to school closures commencing mid-March as a result of the pandemic, data for 2019-2020 is not directly comparable to previous years. In an effort to ensure comparability, the overall, historical suspension data was reanalyzed to use figures for September to March.

### Collection and Reporting of Identity Based Data

5. The collection of identity-based data serves the following purposes:
  - (i) to gather demographic information about the unique and diverse characteristics of the OCDSB's student population;
  - (ii) to identify and respond to barriers to student learning and well-being;
  - (iii) to enhance the District's capacity to serve its increasingly diverse student population and client communities.

This is the first in a series of reports that begins to look at barriers to student learning and well-being with a view to effecting change that will result in greater support and more equitable outcomes for students who have been minoritized.

6. Data collection, analysis and reporting of identity data is governed by the *Ontario Anti-Racism Act* (2017), and the [\*Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of System Racism\*](#) (2018).

The Data Standards, which apply to public sector institutions in Ontario, establish "consistent, effective practices for producing reliable information to support evidence-based decision-making and public accountability to help eliminate systemic racism and promote racial equity. The Standards set out requirements, rationale, and guidance at every stage from planning and preparation to analysis and reporting. This includes, collecting, using, disclosing, de-identifying, and managing information, including personal information."

An initial report, which presented the story of identity in the OCDSB, was released in June 2020. Background information, including the process for data collection, survey content, and reporting is available on the District [website](#).

7. The availability of this type of data allows for and generates interest in a range of additional reports. As we consider our path forward, we are guided by these principles:
  - i. the collection of race-based data must lead to reliable and high-quality race-based statistics which contribute to informed strategies and evidence-based decision-making; and
  - ii. information collected may only be used for the purpose of eliminating systemic racism and advancing racial equity as defined in subsection 7(2) of the Data Standards.

### Bringing Together the Data Sets

8. The *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey* yielded an overall response rate of 46.5% (34,888 of 74,975; JK to grade 12). Of the 1,674 students who received a suspension during the 2019-2020 school year, 657 (39.2%) participated in the survey. Comparing characteristics of suspended students who DID vs. DID NOT answer the IDB survey using available Trillium data indicates there are some differences between the groups, though these have not been analysed statistically. For example, there was higher representation from:

- students from grades 7 to 9 in the survey sample (9-10% higher as compared to those who did not participate);
- students with Permanent Resident status (+4%);
- English Language Learners (+8%); and
- students who reside in lower income neighbourhoods (+4%).

Conversely, there was less representation from:

- elementary students (-6%); and
- students born in Canada (-5%).

The distributions for Gender and IEP status were similar for suspended students who DID and DID NOT respond to the survey (<1% difference).

9. A QuantCrit framework (Gillborn, Warmington & Demack, 2018) has continued to guide the approach to analysis and reporting of this data. Despite the multidimensional nature of identity, this initial phase of reporting focuses only on single aspects of identity – Indigenous, race, gender, and disability – and does not yet take into account intersectionality (e.g., race x gender).

#### Calculating Disproportionality and/or Disparity Indices

10. This phase of reporting requires the calculation of disproportionality and/or disparity indices for each unit of analysis (Standard 29). In the case of suspensions, both have been calculated where suppression thresholds have been met. Meaningful interpretation of disproportionality and disparity requires the selection of appropriate benchmarks and reference groups, respectively (Standards 30 and 31), as well as the establishment of thresholds (Standard 32) to support monitoring of progress over time.

Calculations for this report have been based on mutually exclusive groups of students (i.e., a student is only counted in one category) for Indigenous identity, race, and gender identity; and inclusive groups (i.e., a student may be counted in more than one category) for disability. For disparity calculations, groups have been compared to “all other” students (race, gender identity) or to a group of students who do not identify as Indigenous or as having a disability. More details about these technical specifications and decisions can be found in the full suspension report (Appendix A).

#### Summary of Suspension Data Analysis and Findings

11. **Overall Results.** Results for 2019-2020 are comparable to those for the past few years, even for the partial year reporting. Specifically:
  - Approximately 2% of OCDSB students were issued a suspension during the 2019-2020 school year, a rate that is consistent with the previous two years for the same time period (September to March);
  - Suspensions rates continue to be higher in the secondary panel than they are in elementary;

- Approximately two-thirds of suspensions issued were single-day suspensions; and
- Close to three-quarters of students who were suspended last year received only one suspension.

For the first time, mandatory and discretionary suspensions were examined separately. Mandatory suspensions involve more significant safety concerns, including reasons such as: weapons related offenses, trafficking drugs, physical assaults that cause bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner, robbery, extortion, sexual assault, repeated bullying, and discretionary suspension reasons that are motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate. Results of this analysis yielded the following:

- Nearly 90% of suspensions issued to students in 2019-2020 were of a discretionary nature;
- Suspensions of a mandatory nature were predominantly issued to students in intermediate and senior grades; and
- The majority of suspensions lasting for six days or more were of a mandatory nature.

### Measuring Equity: Overview of Findings

12. Looking at the data in the context of disproportional representation indicates that students who self-identify as Indigenous, boys, students with special education needs (excluding gifted), English language learners, and students residing in lower income neighbourhoods are more likely to be suspended. Within the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* survey, students who identified as First Nations, Métis, Black Middle Eastern, Indigenous (Race), boy or man, gender diverse, or with a disability (i.e., Autism, Learning, Developmental, Mental Health, and/or Addiction) were disproportionately represented in the suspension data. Appendix A includes a more fulsome analysis of these groups, including tables and charts for the full student population<sup>1</sup>, but some key highlights of the findings include:

- In the context of race, disparities were greatest for Indigenous students (3.5), followed by Middle Eastern students (2.3) and Black students (1.9), with likelihood of suspension between 2 and 3.5 times higher than other students who responded to the *Valuing Voices* survey.
- The suspension rate for students with special education needs was 2.5 times higher than the overall student population, and these students were 4 times as likely to receive a suspension compared to all other students.
- Students who self-identified as having a disability(ies) on the *Valuing Voices* survey had a suspension rate 2.5 times higher than the overall survey

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<sup>1</sup> An infographic-style companion document is being prepared to showcase the results of analysis on four dimensions of identity (Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability) for the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* Survey conducted in 2019-2020.

- population, and were 4 times as likely to receive a suspension as compared to students who self-identified as not having disability. The largest disparities were recorded for students reporting Addiction(s) (10.5), followed by Mental Health (6.1), Another disability not listed (5.4) and Developmental (5.4).
- Students who self-identified as Gender Diverse (i.e., a gender other than Boy/Man or Girl/Woman) on the *Valuing Voices* survey were twice as likely to be suspended, both compared to all students (1.91) and all other students (1.94).
  - English language learners are 1.9 times more likely to receive a suspension as compared to all other students.
13. Findings from this report shine a light on some of the inequities that exist in our system in relation to disciplinary policies and practices. They reinforce our call to action as a system to eliminate the systemic barriers and biases that prevent all students from reaching their full potential, particularly students who identify as Indigenous, Black, and who have been minoritized (a term which includes racialized, religious, 2SLGBTQ+ and people with a disability).
14. The rate at which discretionary suspensions are issued, particularly those that last for only one day, point to larger issues, including lack of student engagement and threats to feelings of safety and sense of belonging. Behaviour that is deemed to be inappropriate should be viewed as an opportunity to understand the underlying needs of the student. Rather than using suspensions to manage student behaviour, the focus of our work must shift towards creating learning environments for students where they: are comfortable expressing themselves without fear of retribution; are truly engaged in their learning; and see themselves reflected in the curriculum and in the staff who are responsible for supporting their learning and well-being while in school. It is through these actions and the use of a progressive discipline approach that we teach children the skills necessary to self-regulate and facilitate their understanding of the consequences of their actions.

## Next Steps

### Creating Safe Spaces and Conditions for Learning

15. Recognizing the importance of the early years in setting the foundation for positive learning experiences, the Ontario Ministry of Education recently introduced a new regulation (O. Reg.440/20) which removes the principal's discretion to suspend students enrolled in junior kindergarten to grade 3 for activities listed in subsection 306(1) of the Education Act.
16. Funding has been allocated to school districts to help support the implementation of these changes. In the OCDSB, this work includes collaboration across multiple



departments, including Learning Support Services, Program and Learning, and Safe Schools. For example, the Early Learning Team in LSS is continuing to provide coaching and mentoring support to Kindergarten teachers, ECEs and EAs to promote positive student behaviour. Examples include professional learning sessions focused on the factors that impact behaviour (e.g., implicit bias, traumatic experiences); specific programming (e.g., Mindmasters 2); and implementing the Third Path framework to further promote sense of belonging, physical and emotional safety, and self-regulation amongst students.

17. In addition, both the *OCDSB Strategic Plan 2019-2023* and the *Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap* outline some of the key work being undertaken by the District to promote more safe and inclusive learning spaces for students including:
  - a review of the Safe Schools Policy, including policies and practices associated with police involvement in schools);
  - the establishment of foundational mandatory professional learning for school and District staff in Indigenous knowledge, Diversity and Inclusion Fundamentals, Unconscious Bias, anti-racism/anti-oppression and human rights;
  - implementation of a staff census to better understand the representativeness of the OCDSB workforce and identifying strategies to increase representation of minoritized groups in leadership roles and those directly impacting student learning and well-being;
  - redesigning course content (e.g., Social Studies, History and Geography; Grade 9-12 English) to include and represent Indigenous, Black and minoritized histories perspectives and ways of knowing;
  - introduction of Indigenous and Black Graduation coaches at specific sites to promote and support student success and pathways to graduation;
  - expansion of leadership and networking opportunities for Indigenous, Black and minoritized youth.
  - Staff will continue to work with the community and system to identify additional strategies and supports to help address these issues of inequity.

#### Next Steps in Identity Based Data Analysis and Reporting

18. Dialogue with communities will be critical in the development of data sharing protocols/agreements (e.g., the rights of First Nations communities to have ownership, control, access, and possession of their data). This will form part of the governance work to be undertaken, along with the development of a District policy and/or procedure that establishes parameters for access to public use data sets (i.e., Open Data) more broadly.

19. Recognizing the complexity of the data and the significant interest in using the data to effect change, we must be very thoughtful about our expectations and approach to reporting. A phased approach to analysis and reporting which ensures timely and useable information, and informs decision-making will be critical. For the 2020-2021 school year, the following additional reports are being planned, all of which will focus on Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability:
  - Grade 10 credit accumulation (proxy for graduation) – January 2021
  - Elementary and secondary achievement and streaming – March 2021
  - Sense of belonging – June 2021
20. Future reports will need to examine other demographic variables not incorporated into the reports being generated during the 2020-2021 school year (i.e., language, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status), intersectionality across different dimensions of identity, and the integration of perceptual data (e.g., sense of belonging, student well-being, school safety, etc.).

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

21. Over the past two years, the District has received \$153,000 in one-time funding through Transfer Payment Agreements to support this work up to August 2020. These funds were used to hire research staff and consultant services for the facilitation of focus groups and community partner meetings. Approximately \$200,000 was allocated through the annual budget process for the 2020-2021 school year to support the governance work (e.g., establishment of data sharing agreements with First Nations communities, development of an open data policy) and extension of contract staff in the *Research, Evaluation and Analytics Division*.

## COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

22. Our collaboration with community organizations has been critical to informing our practice. Following the release of the June 2020 report, a meeting was held with community partners to share the results and discuss next steps. Based on feedback from participants, a timeline for a series of initial reports to be released during the 2020-2021 school year was developed. Work with community organizations will continue and reports such as this are shared so that we have a collective understanding of the data, opportunities to discuss findings, and most importantly opportunities to discuss next steps.
23. A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has been established to support ongoing work on reporting with identity based data to ensure alignment with the Data Standards. This Group will ensure there is a forum which engages community organizations in ongoing input/dialogue regarding research methodology and

statistical analysis of identity based data. Terms of Reference for the TAG can be found in Appendix B. The first meeting is scheduled for November 6.

24. Ongoing communication about the use of the survey data to the community, particularly to participants, is a vital part of the process. Sharing the process and results – in report format, infographic and through an open data set for public use – increases credibility, usability and impact. It is important for participants to see how the data is treated, how their responses are being used, and the impact that their participation has on the future work of the organization.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

The following questions are provided for discussion purposes:

- What stands out for you in the data/information that is presented?
- What questions does the data/information raise?
- What actions/next steps should be considered?

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Michèle Giroux  
Executive Officer, Corporate Services

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

Appendix A-2019-2020 Suspension Report  
Appendix B-OCDSB Technical Advisory Group: Anti-Racism Data Standards



## 2019-2020 Student Suspension Report

### Background

The OCDSB reports annually on student suspension data. This year's suspension report marks the first opportunity to report on District-level identity-based data, collected during the 2019-2020 year, linked to a student outcome measure. This connection affords us the opportunity for deeper analysis of students' experiences based on other aspects of identity such as self-identified Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability. In so doing, it allows us to focus our examination of suspension data through an equity lens, assisting in the identification of patterns and trends that may indicate racial inequity, and serving as a basis for discussions with the broader community to develop strategies to eliminate the barriers and biases that may be contributing to these outcomes. The reporting approach taken here reflects this focus and provides a foundation for conversations with stakeholders on equity by examining suspension data in a new light, and showcases some of the key work that has been underway to begin incorporating identity based data into regular reporting cycles.

### What we are talking about

Schools use a progressive discipline approach in an effort to promote positive student behaviour. Despite varied efforts to promote a positive learning environment, there are occasions in which student behaviour is considered to be unacceptable or unsafe. In these cases, a range of options – including suspension or expulsion – are considered that take into account both the situation and individual circumstances that will allow the school to determine the most appropriate course of action and help students to learn from their choices. Given the extremely small number of expulsions issued in the OCDSB annually, the focus of this report is on suspensions only.

Board Policy P.020.SCO Student Suspensions requires that a summary report of student suspensions be submitted to the Board annually. This report provides an overview of student suspensions for the period 3 September 2019 to 13 March 2020 in an effort to help identify emerging trends in unacceptable or unsafe behaviour. Where there are fewer than 10 students, data has been suppressed in order to protect the privacy of individuals; this practice is consistent with EQAO reporting guidelines. It is important to note that while the information presented describes the general trends in suspensions over time, conclusions cannot be drawn as to what specifically is contributing to them. For example, while it is reasonable to believe that a reduction in suspensions suggests that there are fewer incidents or that schools are more effective in their use of prevention and early intervention strategies, this conclusion cannot be drawn based on the information available in this report alone.

## **What we know**

Research has raised several concerns around the existence of unintended negative consequences of suspension policies, and questioned the effectiveness of suspensions as an agent for behavioural change. Students who receive a suspension in early years are more likely to be suspended again in later grades, and are less likely to complete high school as compared to students who never receive a suspension. In addition, suspensions that come as a consequence of violent behaviour do not appear to reduce students' likelihood to engage in similar behaviour in the future ([Huang & Cornell, 2018](#)).

Racial, socioeconomic, and gender disparities in disciplinary practices within the education system (i.e., suspensions and expulsions) have been well-documented in research literature, especially in the United States (e.g., [GAO, 2018](#)). While less research is available on suspensions in a Canadian context, the Ontario Human Rights Commission ([July 2003](#)) reported:

*"In the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and other parts of Ontario there is a strong perception, which is supported by some independent evidence, that the Act and school board policies are having a disproportionate impact on racial minority students, particularly Black students, and students with disabilities."*

A report published by York University in collaboration with the Toronto District School Board and other community partners, acknowledges there are racial disparities in disciplinary actions within the greater Toronto area, particularly for Black, Indigenous, Mixed, and Middle Eastern youth ([York University, April 2017](#)). Several recommendations were put forward in the report, including the establishment of a mandate from the Ministry for all Ontario school boards to be collecting this kind of data and publishing on an annual basis. This work began in earnest in 2017 through the Equity Secretariat following release of the Anti-Racism Act (2017) and accompanying Data Standards (2018).

An understanding of the impact of suspensions on students is crucial to ensuring caring and safe schools, and reducing unintended negative consequences of suspensions on students – especially those already experiencing academic or social barriers which place them at higher levels of risk. Within the OCDSB, higher suspension rates have been reported for specific groups of students based on demographic characteristics available through Trillium (ELL, special education needs excluding gifted, low-SES, male, Indigenous self-identification). Through the lens of the Anti-Racism Act (2017) and accompanying Data Standards, we are transitioning the way in which we examine issues of equity in educational outcomes for students in our District and are now able to shine a light on aspects of identity that have not been available to us before. The use of self-reported Identity Based data, collected for the first time through the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey* in 2019-2020, also affords us a richer, more multi-dimensional investigation of some similar (previously explored) identity constructs than is currently offered through the Student Information System (Trillium).

### **What we have heard**

Community partner organizations, parents, and students who have experienced barriers and biases in the school system have long voiced their concerns about disciplinary actions in the OCDSB, and the impact they are having on students. The following quotes were captured through the parent and student focus groups held in the Spring of 2019 as part of the work associated with the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey (Valuing Voices)*:

*“Black/Muslim community are being patrolled and suspended more-targeting these groups, the rules/policies need to be changed. Student suspended from being absent for two days because of a previous involvement in something at the school, even though they did nothing wrong.”*

*“Important for child now identity fits into systemic barriers, racialized child suspended for standing up against white admin.”*

*“Son suspended by white VP-need race-based data to understand who is being suspended or leaving schools. Leaving because they don’t feel supported in OCDSB. Need to collect data on who is leaving OCDSB.”*

## Key Findings: Suspension Data (2019-2020)

### **Overall Suspension Results**

Results for 2019-2020 are comparable to those for the past few years, even for the partial year reporting. Specifically:

- Approximately 2% of OCDSB students were issued a suspension during the 2019-2020 school year, a rate that is consistent with the previous two years for the same time period (September to March);
- Suspensions rates continue to be higher in the secondary panel than they are in elementary;
- Nearly two-thirds of suspensions issued were single-day suspensions; and
- Close to three-quarters of students who were suspended last year received only one suspension.

For the first time, mandatory and discretionary suspensions were examined separately, yielding the following findings:

- Nearly 90% of suspensions issued to students in 2019-2020 were of a discretionary nature;
- Suspensions of a mandatory nature were predominantly issued to students in intermediate and senior grades; and
- The majority of suspensions lasting for six days or more were of a mandatory nature.

### **Measuring Equity: Overview of Findings**

For many years, students, parents, and community partners have raised concerns that racialized students, students of diverse gender identities, and students with disabilities are disproportionately represented in the suspension data and often face increased risk of disciplinary action compared to other students. The data supports these concerns and indicates that some student populations are suspended at a disproportionate rate. The illustration on the following page provides an overview of the relative risk of being suspended for different groups of students based on their representation in the full student population, and on the subset of students who participated in *Valuing Voices* Survey<sup>1</sup>. Values above 1.0 indicate overrepresentation in suspension data, and thus reflect higher risk of suspension. Note that while trends are similar across data sources, and *Valuing Voices* results tend to mirror those of the overall student population, values do vary.

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<sup>1</sup> An infographic-style companion document is being prepared to showcase the results of analysis on four dimensions of identity (Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability) for the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* Survey conducted in 2019-2020.



## Overview of Disproportionality Indices for Suspensions by Reporting Group and Data Source

Compared to the overall population, how likely is it a student from THIS group will receive a suspension?

Legend:	< 1.0 Underrepresentation (Less risk of suspension)		1.0 Parity (Equal risk)		1.0 > Overrepresentation (Greater risk of Suspension)							
All Students (Trillium)	Indigenous Status	Elementary	Primary (K-3)	Junior (4-6)	Intermediate (7-8)	Secondary Senior (9-12)	Female	Male	Spec. Ed. Excluding Gifted	Low-SES	English Language Learners	
	2.2	0.8	0.5	0.9	1.3	1.5	0.4	1.6	2.5	1.8	1.7	
Valuing Voices (Subset)	Indigenous Self-ID		Race		Gender Identity			Disability				
	Does not identify as Indigenous	Métis	East Asian	South Asian	White	Girl or Woman	Boy or Man	Gender Diverse	Does not identify as having a disability	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Learning	Another
		2.1	0.2	0.3	0.9	0.4	1.6	1.9		2.7	2.7	3.4
	First Nation		Black	Middle Eastern	Indigenous Race				Developmental	Mental Health	Addiction(s)	
	2.3		1.8	2.0	3.5							
	No Data Available (Suppressed due to less than 10 student suspensions in each group)	Inuit	Latino/Latina/Latinx	Southeast Asian	Another	Gender Fluid	Gender Non-Conforming	Non-Binary	Blind or Low Vision	Chronic Pain	Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Mobility
						Questioning	Trans Boy or Man	Trans Girl or Woman	Physical	Speech Impairment	Undisclosed	
						Two-Spirit	Another	Not Sure				

## Overall Student Suspensions Results

The Ministry of Education collects suspension data for all publicly funded school districts in Ontario through the 30 June OnSIS submission. Suspension rates are calculated as a percentage of the October 31 enrolment and include suspensions issued over the full course of the year (i.e., between the first day of school in September and the last day of school in June). Due to the COVID-19 disruption in the 2019-2020 school year, suspensions were only reported from the beginning of September until March break. In an effort to ensure comparability, the overall, historical suspension data was reanalyzed to use figures for September to March.

### Historical Trends

Table 1 provides the adjusted five-year historical overview of enrolment and suspension data, disaggregated for the elementary and secondary panels, using extracts from Trillium. For the 2019-2020 school year, the student suspension rate for the OCDSB was 2.2% (1,674), covering the period from beginning of September to March break.

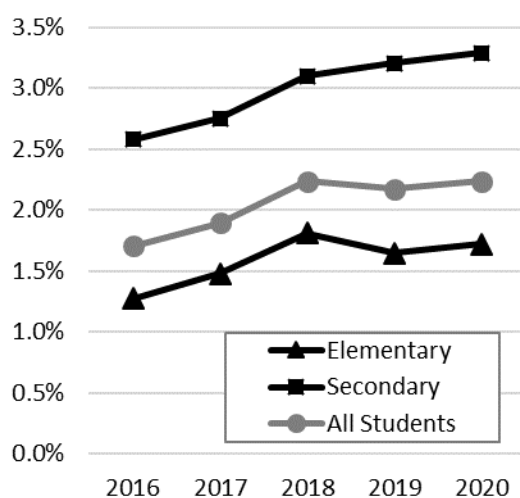
**Table 1: Historical Overview of Enrolment and Suspension Data (September to March Break)**

<b>Student Enrolment</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<i>Elementary</i>	47,685	48,702	49,106	49,532	50,295
<i>Secondary</i>	23,886	23,790	24,465	25,440	24,559
<b>Total</b>	<b>71,571</b>	<b>72,492</b>	<b>73,571</b>	<b>74,972</b>	<b>74,854</b>
<b>Number of Suspensions Issued by Panel</b>					
<i>Elementary</i>	899	1,167	1,426	1,274	1,305
<i>Secondary</i>	854	917	935	1,102	1,069
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,753</b>	<b>2,084</b>	<b>2,361</b>	<b>2,376</b>	<b>2,374</b>
<b>Number of Students Suspended by Panel</b>					
<i>Elementary</i>	606	719	888	815	866
<i>Secondary</i>	616	655	759	815	808
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>1,674</b>

### ***What we are seeing:***

A total of 2,374 suspensions were issued in 2019-2020 – 1,305 at the elementary level, and 1,069 at the secondary level – which is almost the same from the previous year. The overall suspension rate based on a student population of 74,854 was 2.2% (similar to the previous two years).

Figure 1. Suspension Rates: 5-Year Trend by Panel



**What we are seeing:** Suspension rates in the secondary panel have been increasing over time, although their representation in the overall student population has remained stable (33-34% of all students). Despite representing only about one-third of the student population, suspensions at the secondary level accounted for 46% of all suspensions in the last two years. In 2019-2020, secondary students were 1.5 times more likely to receive a suspension than elementary students.

### Discretionary vs. Mandatory Suspensions

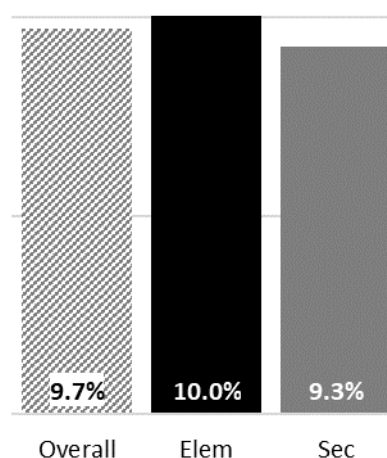
**Why it matters:** Suspensions are classified as either discretionary or mandatory based on the nature of the incident/grounds for suspension. Section 306 of the Education Act outlines circumstances where principals must consider suspension (i.e. discretionary suspensions), while Section 310 outlines the circumstances where principals must suspend and consider expulsion (i.e. mandatory suspensions). Mandatory suspensions are ones of more significant safety concerns, including reasons such as: weapons related offenses, trafficking drugs, physical assaults that cause bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner, robbery, extortion, sexual assault, repeated bullying, and discretionary suspension reasons that are motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate. Examining the frequency with which discretionary and mandatory suspensions are issued can provide insight into where there is room for system-level change.

**What we are seeing:** Only 10% of suspensions issued in 2019-2020 were mandatory in nature (230 of 2,374). Further breakdown by Panel shows a slightly higher rate of mandatory suspensions in elementary (JK-8) as compared to secondary (grades 9-12) (see Table 2).

Table 2: Number of Suspensions by Type, 2019-2020

Number of Suspensions by Type	Elem	Sec	All
Mandatory	131	99	230
Discretionary	1,174	970	2,144
<b>All Suspensions</b>	<b>1,305</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>2,374</b>
<b>Rate of mandatory suspensions</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>

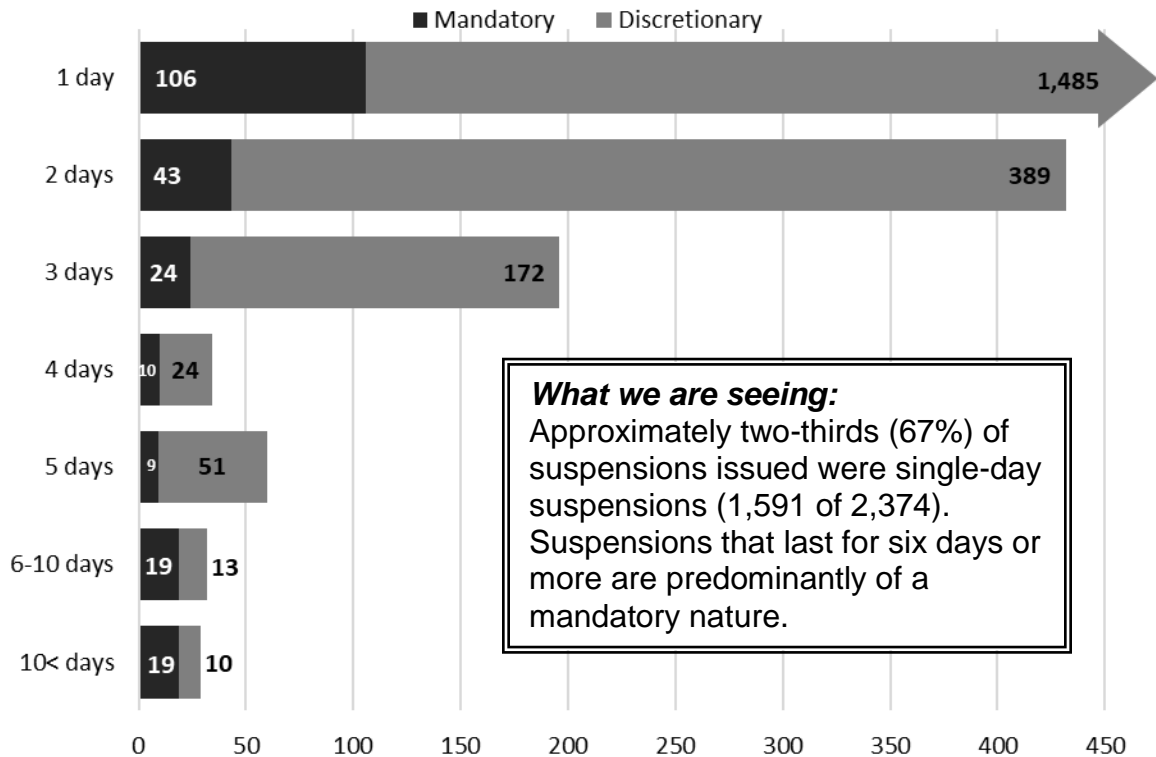
Figure 2. Suspension Rates by Panel (September 2019 – March 2020)



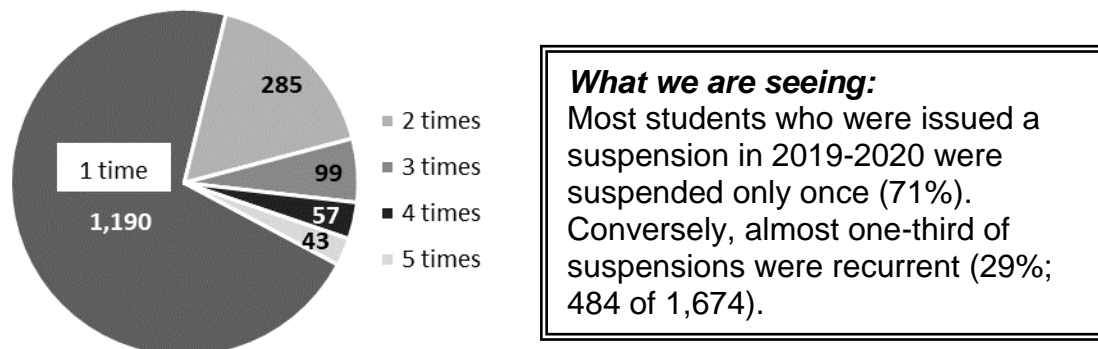
### **Suspension Duration and Frequency**

**Why it matters:** Absences have been shown to be detrimental to student outcomes. Suffering a prolonged or repeated absence from the classroom as a result of a suspension can contribute to even greater challenges for students who are already at a disadvantage due to other risk factors. Therefore, gaining insight into both the length of time and the frequency with which a student is removed from the learning environment is important. The information below pertains to 2019-2020 suspensions only.

**Figure 3. Number of Suspensions by Duration and Type**



**Figure 4. Number of Times a Student was Issued a Suspension During the School Year**



## Appendix A to Report No. 20-085

**Digging Deeper: 'Divison' in 2019-2020 Suspension Data**

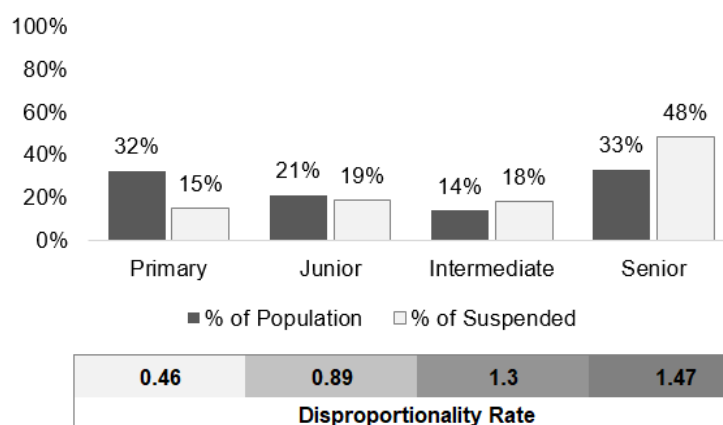
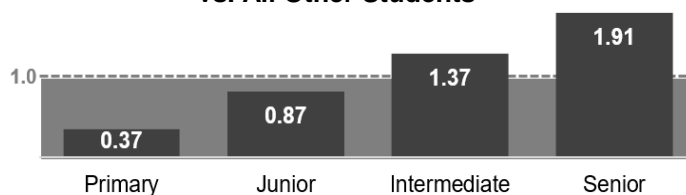
**Why it matters:** Given suspension data is reported at a District-level, there remain a lot of questions around which students might be most at risk. Providing this level of detail is important when considering school-level conversations. Given school structures vary throughout the District, exploring Suspension data at a Division-level may help in identifying where we can look to make changes that will have the greatest impact on students with the highest risk. The following analyses reflect the full student population.

**Table 3: Student Suspensions by Division (All Students) in 2019-2020**

	Primary (K-Gr.3)	Junior (Gr.4-6)	Intermediate (Gr.7-8)	Senior (Gr.9-12)	All
Student Enrolment	24,257	15,724	10,314	24,559	74,854
Number of Students Suspended	251	314	301	808	1,674
<b>Suspension Rate</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>

**What we are seeing:**

An analysis of suspensions at a Division-level shows a pattern of increasing risk of suspension as students progress into higher grades. *Intermediate* students show a similar pattern of overrepresentation as *Senior* students. Despite being a substantially smaller population, Intermediate students (Grades 7 & 8) show similar disproportionate rates of suspension to Senior students (Grades 9-12), and were almost equally as likely to be suspended (disproportionality 1.30 and 1.47, respectively).

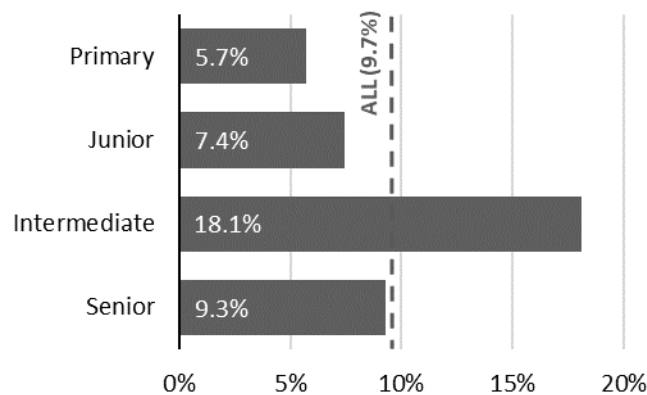
**Figure 5. Distribution of Students by Panel****Figure 6. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students**

**To think about:** Grade 7 & 8 marks a transition between Elementary to Secondary. How might experiencing this transition contribute to students' risk for suspension, either directly or indirectly?

## Appendix A to Report No. 20-085

**Table 4: Type and Number of Suspensions Issued by Division (All Students) in 2019-2020**

	Primary (K-Gr.3)	Junior (Gr.4-6)	Intermediate (Gr.7-8)	Senior (Gr.9-12)	All
<b>Number of Suspensions Issued by Type</b>					
<i>Mandatory</i>	26	34	71	99	230
<i>Discretionary</i>	429	424	321	970	2,144
<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>2,374</b>
<b>Suspension Rate by Type</b>					
<i>Mandatory</i>	5.7%	7.4%	18.1%	9.3%	9.7%
<i>Discretionary</i>	94.3%	92.6%	81.9%	90.7%	90.3%

**Figure 7. Rates of Mandatory Suspension by Division (2019-2020)**

**What we are seeing:** While the previous overall analysis indicated mandatory suspensions occurred at a higher rate in the Elementary as compared to Secondary Panel, a closer look by Division revealed that the Intermediate rate is exceptionally high, and as a result the Elementary rate was overinflated.

## Through a New Lens: Measuring Equity

For many years, students, parents, and community partners have raised concerns that racialized students, students of diverse gender identities, and students with disabilities are disproportionately represented in the suspension data and often face increased risk of disciplinary action compared to other students. The data supports these concerns and indicates that some student populations are suspended at a disproportionate rate.

Through the lens of the Anti-Racism Act (2017) and accompanying Data Standards, we are transitioning the way in which we examine issues of equity in educational outcomes for students in our District and are now able to shine a light on aspects of identity that have not been available to us before. Together, *disproportionality* and *disparity* indices help us to quantify the risk that students within each of these groups will experience a suspension.

- **Disproportionality** answers the question: *Compared to the all students, how likely is it that a student from this group will be issued a suspension?*
- **Disparity** answers the question: *Compared to other students, how likely is it that a student from this group will be issued a suspension?*<sup>2</sup>

With different points of reference, these two indices each offer unique insight in measuring equity. Therefore, they have both been reported where there are a minimum of ten students on which to report (i.e., suppression threshold has been met).

The analyses that follow provides an examination of the relative risk of being suspended for different groups of students based on various characteristics captured in Trillium, and on four dimensions of identity (Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, and disability) for the subset of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* Survey conducted in 2019-2020.

Calculations based on information collected in the *Valuing Voices* survey reflect mutually exclusive groups of students (i.e., a student is only counted in one category) for Indigenous identity, race, and gender identity; and inclusive groups (i.e., a student may be counted in more than one category) for disability. For disparity calculations, groups have been compared to “all other” students (race, gender identity) or to a group of students who do not identify as Indigenous or as having a disability. As a result, while trends are similar across data sources, index values do vary. For the benefit of the reader, further details can be found in the Technical Considerations portion of this report.

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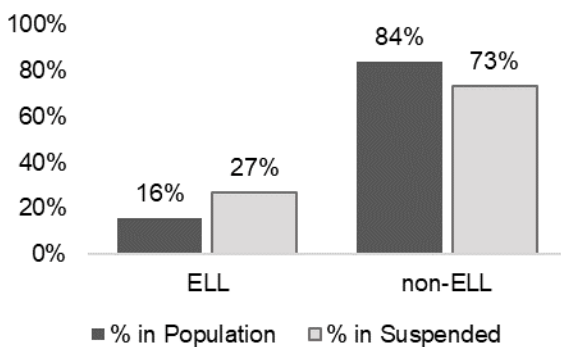
<sup>2</sup> Depending on the nature of the analysis, another specific group serves as a benchmark group against which comparisons are made and disparity is measured.

## Suspensions by Student Demographics

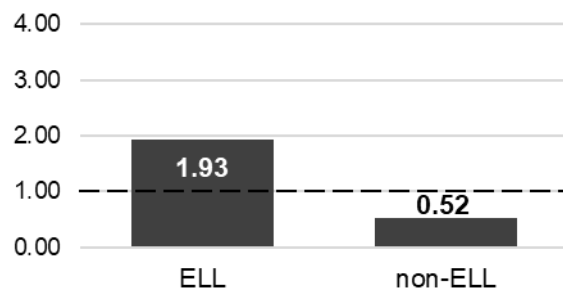
### English Language Learners

In 2019-2020, approximately 16% of the OCDSB student population was identified as an English language learner (11,946 of 74,854), yet accounted for 27% (449) of students who were suspended. The suspension rate for English language learners was 1.7 times higher than expected given their representation in the overall student population, and were nearly two times as likely to receive a suspension as compared to all other students.

**Figure 8. Distribution of English Language Learners (2019-2020)**



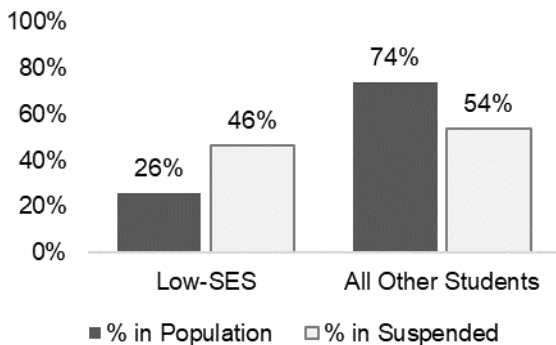
**Figure 9. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students**



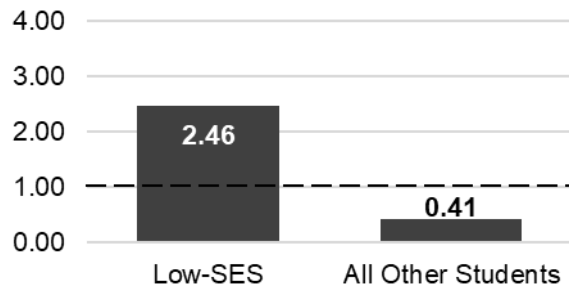
### Students Residing in Lower-income Neighbourhoods (LowSES)

In 2019-2020, 26% of the OCDSB student population lived in lower-income neighbourhoods (19,503 of 74,854), yet accounted for 46% (777) of students who were suspended. The suspension rate for these students was 1.8 times higher than expected given their representation in the overall student population, and they were 2.5 times more likely to receive a suspension compared to all other students.

**Figure 10. Distribution of Students Residing in Lower-income Neighbourhoods (2019-2020)**



**Figure 11. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students**

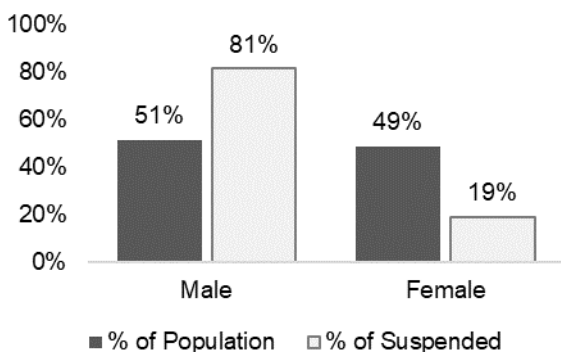




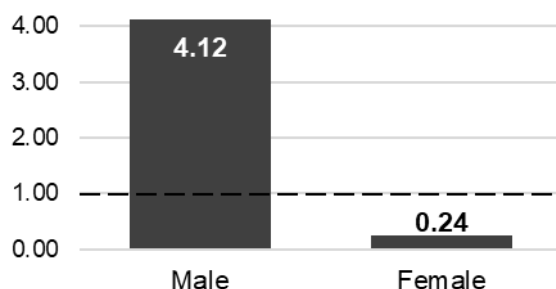
## Gender Identity

In 2019-2020, the OCDSB student population was relatively equally split across male (38,419) and female (36,435), yet males accounted for 81% (1,361) of students who were suspended compared to only 19% of females (313). This over-representation of boys by nearly 1.6 times, and the likelihood of suspension being 4 times higher than that for girls, has been a relatively stable trend over the past few years.

**Figure 12. Distribution of Students by Gender (2019-2020)**



**Figure 13. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students**



### Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Gender

Gender differences similar to those witnessed in the overall suspension report were also evident in the subset of suspended students who participated in the *Valuing Voices* survey.

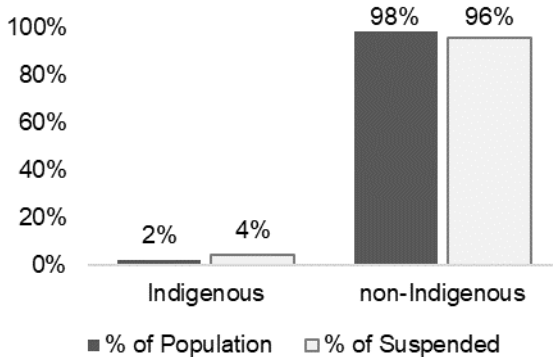
#### Highlights include:

- Despite representation in the overall population being similar, Boys/Men and Girls/Women showed opposing trends;
- Boy/Men accounted for 76% of all suspensions issued, and were 3.4 times as likely to be suspended compared to their peers, whereas Girls/Women accounted for 18% of all suspensions and were 4 times less likely to be suspended.
- Additional response options for gender identity accounted for 1.9% of the overall student population, however additional reporting was suppressed due to the small number of suspensions witnessed within each of these groups. To provide some indication of overall trends in suspension data for remaining gender identities, a *Gender Diverse* group was fashioned for reporting purposes (including Another/Not Listed, excluding 'Not Sure'). This combined Gender Diverse group accounted for 3.7% of All Suspensions, and students therein were twice as likely to be suspended (both compared to All Students, 1.91, and All Others, 1.94, respectively)

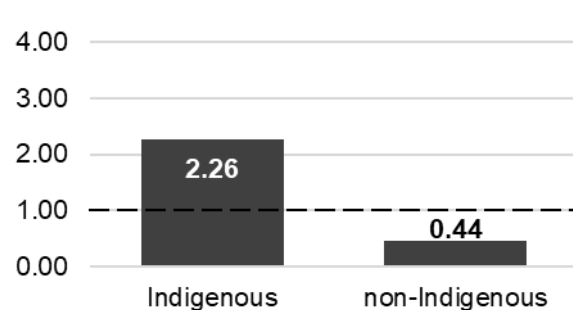
### Indigenous Identity

In 2019-2020, approximately 2% of the OCDSB student population self-identified as Indigenous (1,419 of 74,854), yet accounted for 4% (70) of students who were suspended. The suspension rate for Indigenous students was twice as high as would be expected based on the size of this group in the overall student population. Indigenous students were approximately 2.3 times as likely to receive a suspension as compared to all other students, while non-indigenous students were less than half as likely.

**Figure 14. Distribution of Self-Identified Indigenous Students (2019-2020)**







**Figure 15. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students**



#### **Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Indigenous Self-Identification**

For the subset of suspended students who self-identified as Indigenous on the *Valuing Voices* survey, the same patterns of disproportionate representation found in the full District level results was observed.

##### *Specifically:*

-  Students self-identifying as Indigenous represented 3.3% of all survey respondents, but accounted for 7.3% of suspensions;
-  The suspension rate for all students who self-identified as Indigenous was 4.2%, reflecting an overrepresentation by 2.3 times as compared to full population of students who responded to the *Valuing Voices* survey (suspension rate=1.9%).
-  When compared to students who self-identified as non-Indigenous, Indigenous students were likewise 2.3 times as likely to experience a suspension.
-  When disaggregated by Indigenous community, First Nation and Métis reflected disproportionality and disparity indices that were above 2.0; reliable estimates could not be calculated for the Inuit community due to small numbers.



### Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Race

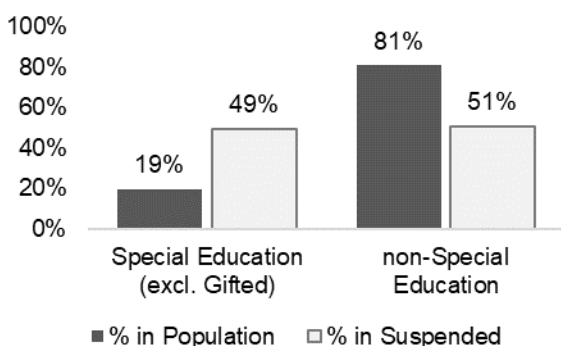
The following racial disproportionalities were evident in the subset of suspended students who responded to *Valuing Voices* survey:

- ✎ Both Middle Eastern and Black students had suspension rates almost 2 times higher than expected given their representation in the *Valuing Voices* subset, while Indigenous students were by far the most overrepresented group with rates almost 3.5 times that of the *Valuing Voices* population. Disparities were greatest for Indigenous students (3.5), followed by Middle Eastern students (2.3) and Black students (1.9), with likelihood of suspension between 2 and 3.5 times higher than other students.
- ✎ South Asian and East Asian students had the lowest suspension rates. South Asians were 3 times less likely to be suspended compared to other students, while East Asians were almost 4 times less likely to be suspended.
- ✎ White students were slightly underrepresented in suspension data but showed a similar pattern and suspension rate to the overall student population

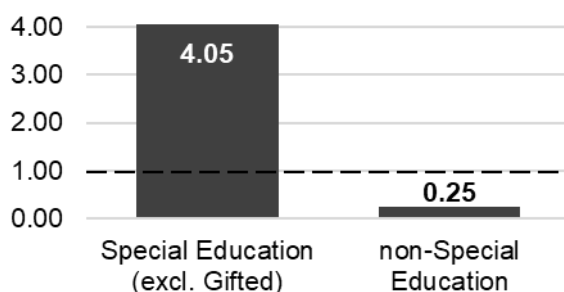
### Students with Special Education Needs

In 2019-2020, approximately 19% of the OCDSB student population was identified with special education needs (excluding gifted) (14,498 of 74,854), yet accounted for 49% (825) of students who were suspended. The suspension rate for students with special education needs was 2.5 times higher than expected given their representation in the overall student population, and were 4 times as likely to receive a suspension compared to all other students.

**Figure 16. Distribution of Students with Special Education Needs (2019-2020)**

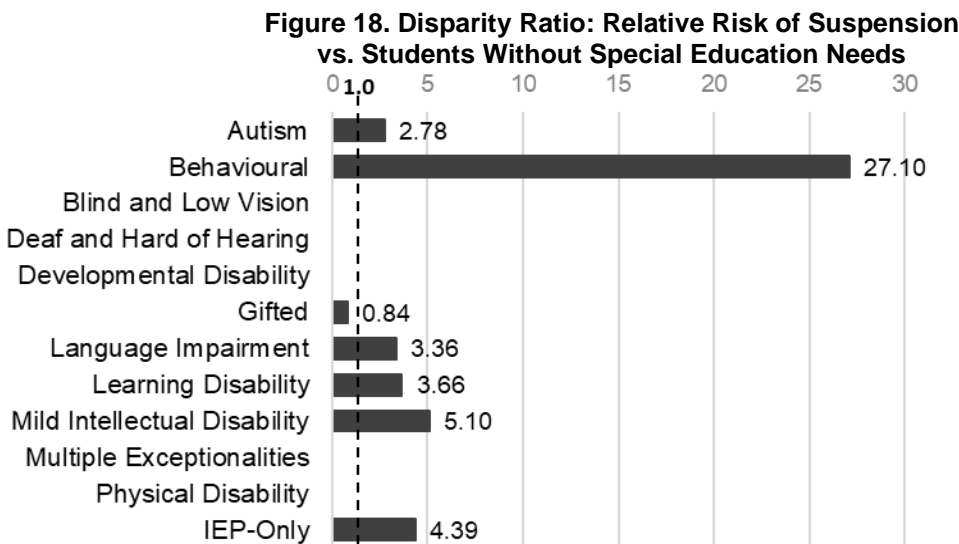


**Figure 17. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students**



Students who have not met or been formally identified with an exceptionality, but who have an IEP, make up about 13% of the overall student population (9,423 of 74,854). The remaining 6% of students with special education needs are distributed across eleven (11) exceptionalities with rates ranging from less than 1% to no more than 2% of the overall student population. Closer examination of suspension data shows suspension rates range from a low of 1.2% for students identified as Gifted to 38.1% for students with a behavioral exceptionality, and that the relative risk of suspension for students with specific exceptionalities compared to their peers without special education




needs are quite remarkable. For example, students identified with a behavioural exceptionality are 27 times as likely to receive a suspension compared to students who have not been identified with special education needs.



### ***Spotlight on Valuing Voices: Disability***

Students who self-identified as having a disability(ies) in the *Valuing Voices* survey showed a strikingly similar pattern to the larger District-level group of students with special education needs (excluding gifted).

Findings include:

-  Student who self-identified as having a disability(ies) only represented approximately 7% of all students suspended at the District-level, but accounted for 50% of suspended students who responded to the survey.
-  Student who self-identified as having a disability(ies) had a suspension rate 2.5 times higher than the overall survey population, and were 4 times more likely to be suspended than students who self-identified as not having a disability(ies) on the survey.
-  The largest disparities were recorded for students reporting Addiction(s) (10.5), followed by Mental Health (6.1), Another disability not listed (5.4) and Developmental (5.4).

## Summary and Next Steps

The findings from this report shine a light on some of the inequities that exist in our system in relation to disciplinary policies and practices. This reinforces our call to action as a system to eliminate the systemic barriers and biases that prevent all students from reaching their full potential, particularly students who identify as Indigenous, Black, and who have been minoritized (a term which includes racialized, religious, 2SLGBTQ+ and people with a disability).

### **Creating Safe Spaces and Conditions for Learning**

The rate at which discretionary suspensions are issued, particularly those that last for only one day, point to larger issues within the system, including lack of student engagement and threats to feelings of safety and sense of belonging (e.g., Duke University, 2010). Behaviour that is deemed to be inappropriate should be viewed as an opportunity to understand the underlying needs of the student. Rather than using suspensions to manage student behaviour, the focus of our work must shift towards creating learning environments for students where they: are comfortable expressing themselves without fear of retribution; are truly engaged in their learning; and see themselves reflected in the curriculum and in the staff who are responsible for supporting their learning and well-being while in school. It is through these actions and the use of a progressive discipline approach that we teach children the skills necessary to self-regulate and facilitate their understanding of the consequences of their actions.

Recognizing the importance of the early years in setting the foundation for positive learning experiences, the Ontario Ministry of Education recently introduced a new regulation (O. Reg.440/20) which removes the principal's discretion to suspend students enrolled in junior kindergarten to grade 3 for activities listed in subsection 306(1) of the Education Act. Funding has been allocated to school districts to help support the implementation of these changes. In the OCDSB, this work involves collaboration across multiple departments, including Learning Support Services (LSS), Program and Learning, and Safe Schools. As one example, the Early Learning Team in LSS is continuing to provide coaching and mentoring support to Kindergarten teachers, ECEs and EAs with the goal of promoting positive student behaviour. Professional learning sessions focused on factors that impact behaviour (e.g., implicit bias, traumatic experiences); specific programming (e.g., Mindmasters 2); and implementing the Third Path framework all provide opportunities to further promote sense of belonging, physical and emotional safety, and self-regulation amongst students.

In addition to targeted programming and professional learning, the *OCDSB Strategic Plan 2019-2023* and the *Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap* outline some of the key work being undertaken at a District-level to promote more safe and inclusive learning spaces for students. Some of these include:

- a review of the Safe Schools Policy, including policies and practices associated with police involvement in schools;
- the establishment of foundational mandatory professional learning for school and District staff in Indigenous knowledge, Diversity and Inclusion Fundamentals, Unconscious Bias, anti-racism/anti-oppression and human rights;
- implementation of a staff census to better understand the representativeness of the OCDSB workforce and identifying strategies to increase representation of minoritized groups in leadership roles and those directly impacting student learning and well-being;

- redesigning course content (e.g., Social Studies, History and Geography; Grade 9-12 English) to include and represent Indigenous, Black and minoritized histories perspectives and ways of knowing;
- introduction of Indigenous and Black Graduation coaches at specific sites to promote and support student success and pathways to graduation;
- expansion of leadership and networking opportunities for Indigenous, Black and minoritized youth.

Staff will also continue to work with the community and system to identify additional strategies and supports to help address issues of inequity.

### **Data Analysis and Reporting**

As this was the first opportunity to collect and explore reporting of identity-based data using the Ministry's Data Standards, we still have a lot to learn and a long way to go. While the restricted subset of self-identifying constructs that were reported-on here in isolation may appear on the surface as a cursory glance, the various angles and viewpoints under which they can be explored remain under discussion as we look to reconcile our understanding of identity constructs, set meaningful District goals, as well as meet Ministry reporting requirements.

Additional analyses will need to be undertaken to explore suspension data for other dimensions of identity collected through the *Valuing Voices* survey (i.e., language, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and status in Canada). Intersectionality across different aspects of identity also require further investigation, as there are clearly meaningful connections that exist and remain to be explored (e.g., Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation; Ethnicity and Race). Deeper analyses that incorporate student perceptions as they relate to issues of school safety, engagement, and sense of belonging will also be an important consideration. Such analyses not only contribute to a more holistic understanding of our students' self-perceptions and experiences, but also help tease apart the unique contributions of various underlying factors linked to outcomes, as well as distinguish pathways and underlying root-causes. It is also important to recognize limitations to our understanding, as the *Valuing Voices* survey collected information on students but failed to capture the larger context/environment in which they exist/live (i.e., within circles of family, school, community). The complexity of this work, and our District's positioning as one of the first to pursue it with the IDB data/ leads in Ontario, along with our interest in continuing a dialogue/responding to the interests/needs of our various voices/ stakeholders/ community partners, makes this work ongoing.

While Disproportionality and Disparity offer us two ways of *measuring* relative group differences (versus All and versus Another group, respectively), these indices do not indicate whether observed differences are *meaningful*, nor do they tell us what *movement* might be reasonable to expect over time. To better contextualize these indices and make them useful, cut-points referred to as *thresholds* must first be established. As we continue to investigate identity-based data, District-level thresholds will need to be determined in consultation with community partners and other stakeholders in order to identify reasonable targets and monitor progress towards addressing existing inequities. This will form part of the core work in 2019-2020 for the recently established OCDSB Technical Advisory Group: Anti-Racism Data Standards. Once thresholds have been established, monitoring progress towards some of the goals cited in the [Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap](#) (2020) will be easier.

## Technical Considerations

This phase of reporting requires the calculation of a racial disproportionality and/or racial disparity index for each unit of analysis (Standard 29). In the case of suspensions, both have been calculated where suppression thresholds have been met. Meaningful interpretation of disproportionality and disparity requires the selection of appropriate benchmarks and reference groups, respectively (Standards 30 and 31), as well as the establishment of thresholds (Standard 32) to support monitoring of progress over time. The following sections provide an overview of the considerations that were taken into account.

**Units of Analysis.** Most survey questions allowed for the selection of multiple responses, honouring the multidimensionality of identity. From an analysis and reporting perspective, this adds complexity. Analysis must be sensitive to commonalities and differences in experience and treatment among persons reporting multiple responses. For example, Standard 27 (Primary Unit of Analysis) of the Data Standards describes the following considerations in terms of multiple race categories:

*“In some cases, it may make sense to count persons who report White and some other race according to the other race category selected. In other circumstances, it may be necessary and appropriate to aggregate or construct socially meaningful mixed-race categories. For example, a generic mixed-race category may be appropriate if there are insufficient or small numbers of individuals (fewer than 15) who select multiple race categories. If a generic mixed-race category might obscure significant differences, and sample sizes are sufficient, consider using specific combinations of race categories.”*

As a result, three different approaches to assigning respondents to groups were examined to better understand the influence on disparity and disproportionality calculations:

- **exclusive groups** – no overlap across response categories; respondents selecting more than one response option were combined into a “mixed group” option
- **additive groups** – includes exclusive groups for those respondents who selected one response option only, but an additional group was created for each exclusive category that included respondents who selected that category and at least one other response option (e.g., black + white)
- **inclusive groups** – all groups overlap with one another (e.g., the black category includes respondents who selected black either as a single response or in combination with at least one other race category).

Given results did not yield substantive differences in the calculations, results are being reported based on exclusive groups. Not only should it facilitate greater clarity in understanding the results, but it will offer advantages for future analyses exploring intersectionality. The exception to this is disability, where inclusive groups were deemed to more accurately reflect the data due to the comorbid nature of disabilities.

**Benchmarks and Reference Groups.** For purposes of this report, calculations of disproportionality use the population of students who participated in the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey* as a benchmark. After careful consideration, the most appropriate reference group for disparity calculations was deemed to be “all other” respondents (i.e., any respondent not included in the target group) yielding more stable comparisons over time.

**Calculating Disproportionality and Disparity.** Disproportionality is a measure of a specific group's overrepresentation or underrepresentation in an outcome relative to their representation in the overall population. A disproportionality index (or rate) reflects the likelihood/risk that someone from a specific group will experience a certain outcome, relative to the risk in the entire population. A value of 1.0 reflects no disproportionality. A value greater than 1.0 reflects overrepresentation. A value less than 1.0 reflects underrepresentation. Similar to Suspension Rate, scaled shading is used to indicate relative size.

Disparity is a measure of group differences that compares an outcome for a specific group against that of another (BENCHMARK) group. There are many ways of measuring disparities, however, the Data Standards describe calculating a disparity index (ratio) which compares the relative risk/rate in a specific group to the risk/rate in a BENCHMARK group. It measures whether a particular outcome is lower, similar, or higher in a specific group relative to a comparison group. A value of 1.0 reflects no disparity between the risk for the specific group and the benchmark group (same risk). A value greater than 1.0 reflects a higher risk for the specific group. A value less than 1.0 reflects a lower risk for the specific group.

Calculations of disproportionality and disparity are significantly impacted by small numbers. A general rule-of-thumb is to have minimum sample size of 10 and a population size of 30, otherwise estimates are not reliable. This rule has been applied to the reporting of suspension data and indicated with "NA" in the corresponding graphs.

**Interpreting Disproportionality and Disparity.** Meaningful interpretation of disproportionality rates and disparity ratios require the establishment of a threshold, which is an established cut-point used to identify meaningful disproportionality and disparity values. District-level thresholds will need to be determined in consultation with community partners and other stakeholders in order to identify targets and monitor progress towards addressing existing inequities/inequalities. This will be a key outcome for the OCDSB Technical Advisory Group: Anti-Racism Data by the end of June 2021.



## Key Terms

Definition	What does it mean in <i>this</i> report?
<b>SUSPENSION RATES</b> reflect the prevalence of suspensions within a specific group, by comparing the number of students within the group to receive a suspension to the total number of students in the group.	Higher suspension rates indicate a higher occurrence of suspensions over the course of the year within a specific group.
<b>OUTCOMES</b> can be programs, services, or functions.	In this report, our examination focuses on students who experienced a suspension at least once throughout the 2019-2020 school year.
<p><b>DISPROPORTIONALITY</b> is a measure of a specific group's overrepresentation or underrepresentation in an outcome relative to their representation in the overall population.</p> <p><b>A DISPROPORTIONALITY RATE</b> reflects the likelihood/risk that someone from a specific group will experience a certain outcome, relative to the risk in the entire population.</p>	<p><b>Disproportionality</b> answers the question: <i>Compared to the overall student population, how likely is it that a student from this group will be issued a suspension?</i></p> <p>A value of 1.0 reflects equal risk of suspension (parity) relative to All Students. A value greater than 1.0 reflects greater risk (overrepresentation), while a value less than 1.0 reflects lower risk (underrepresentation).</p>
<p><b>DISPARITY</b> is a measure of group differences that compares an outcome for a specific group against that of <u>another</u> group, which serves as a BENCHMARK. There are many ways of measuring disparities.</p> <p><b>A DISPARITY RATIO</b> is a proportion comparing the relative risk/rate in a specific group to the risk/rate in a BENCHMARK group. It measures whether a particular outcome is lower, similar, or higher in a specific group relative to a comparison group.</p>	<p><b>Disparity</b> answers the question: <i>Compared to other students, how likely is it that a student from this group will be issued a suspension?</i></p> <p>A value of 1.0 reflects equal likelihood of suspension (no disparity) compared to the "all other" or a benchmark group. A value greater than 1.0 reflects a higher likelihood of suspension, while a value less than 1.0 reflects a lower likelihood of suspension.</p>
<b>A BENCHMARK</b> is a group used as a common reference point against which to measure disparities. Using the same point of reference for all specific group comparisons means the resulting disparities are comparable to each other.	Disparity calculations for the full student population make use of "all other students" as the benchmark group. When reporting on information collected from the subset of students who participated in the <i>Valuing Voices</i> survey, "all other students" was used for calculations on race and gender identity, while "does not identify as Indigenous" was used to report on Indigenous identity and "does not identify as having a disability" was used to report on disability.
<b>A THRESHOLD</b> is an established cut-point used to identify meaningful disproportionality and disparity values.	District-level thresholds will need to be determined in consultation with community partners and other stakeholders in order to identify targets and monitor progress towards addressing existing inequities.

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## 2020 OCDSB Technical Advisory Group: Anti-Racism Data Standards

### Terms of Reference

#### Description of Mandate

The mandate of the TAG is to provide guidance and feedback to support the analysis and reporting of demographic data collected under the Anti-Racism Act (2017), and in accordance with the Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of System Racism (2018), as they relate to identified outcomes (e.g., suspensions, achievement, streaming, etc.). Specifically:

- [units of analysis](#) (standard 27);
- [analysis of outcomes](#) (standard 28);
- [minimum requirements for analysis](#) (standard 29);
- [benchmarks and reference groups](#) (standards 30 and 31);
- [interpreting analyses](#) (standard 32).

The District will be responsible for undertaking the analyses and reporting of data, as necessary. When it comes to the examination of disproportionality and disparity of outcomes, however, the way in which the standards are interpreted and applied have implications for decision-making and actionable next steps. As a result, having a formal and ongoing relationship with a broad range of community partners and cross-departmental representatives will be important in helping to identify concerns from their respective community(ies) with respect to the analytic approaches being taken or considered and help guide the narrative of what the data is telling us.

#### Membership

The TAG will be comprised of up to 10 community representatives who can share perspectives of individuals who have experienced anti-Black racism, anti-Indigeneity, anti-Semitism, Homophobia, Islamophobia, Transphobia, Poverty/Classism, and Ableism/Disabilities. Members should have experience and knowledge of research and statistical methods and a keen interest in the interrogation of quantitative data.

Participation on the TAG would be of particular interest to individuals with experience in the collection, analysis and reporting of identity based data, an understanding of the Anti-Racism Data Standards, and/or the application of OCAP principles.

The Manager of the Research, Evaluation & Analytics Division will chair the meetings, and will be supported by staff, as required.

#### Scope and Schedule

It is anticipated that the TAG will meet 3 to 4 times per school year. This year, the first meeting will be scheduled for late October with subsequent meetings tentatively planned for November, February and May. Meeting dates are expected to align with planned reporting on identity based data.

**2020 OCDSB Technical Advisory Group: Anti-Racism Data Standards**

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Meetings will be conducted via Zoom and will be scheduled for 1.5 hours during the regular business day. Meetings will be recorded to support note-taking. Meeting notes will be distributed to committee members for review and to verify accuracy.

**Deliverables for 2020-2021**

By the end of June 2021, TAG will have played an instrumental role in reviewing and applying the data standards to inform the analysis and reporting of identity based data, including:

- determining appropriate reference groups and benchmarks for comparison purposes;
- establishing thresholds against which progress towards the elimination of systemic barriers and biases can be measured; and
- discussing strategies to ensure that the data and reporting is accessible and meaningful to the community.