

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY

Thursday, November 26, 2020, 6:00 pm
Zoom Meeting

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Maxine Adwella

Re: Anti- systemic discrimination workshops

For the past three years the National Collaboration for Youth Mental Health, NCYMH, which is a BIPOC mental health organization has been trying to implement Diversity in Student Mental Health in Ottawa to meet a demand from black and diverse and lgbtq2 students. The NCYMH thanks the OCDSB for listening and responding to our submissions on behalf of BIPOC students and LGBTQ2 students. There was a diverse mental health conference planned with the OCDSB but the strike and then covid-19 has delayed it. However, we can do more now to meet the immediate and current needs in this crisis of black and diverse students.

We need school boards and schools across this country to respond to the traumatic intersectionality between racism, mental health and student/life success.

On May 15, 2019 the OCDS adopted the International DEcade for People of African Descent We need the OCDSB to ACT now because the Gorge Floyd incident was a "triggering " event and covid-19 is a "triggering" event and our students are feeling depression, anxiety, and a sense of hopelessness and loss which is impacting their wellbeing, and academic success.

For decades, our society has tried to understand '**systemic discrimination**'; why some students do better in school than others, why families of different races are treated differently when they apply for an apartment or go to the bank for a loan or apply and interview for a job. All that children and youth know is that it 'hurts' to be treated differently and see their parents, whom they looked up to, treated poorly for no other reason than their race, culture, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, or things that are beyond their control. This confusion leads to mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, low school performance, low self-esteem and family stress. It also affects and impacts the children who witness these children and youth being treated differently as they innocently become bystanders to systemic bullying, often against their will. Thus the state of being oppressed causes widespread environmental confusion, marginalization, isolation while consistently exposing all attendees to negativity, which is suffocating to all.

NCYMH submits that OCDSB schools need:

- 1) Youth Mental Health Plans for students who have experienced and are experiencing trauma from racism and others experiences.
- 2) To neutralize student learning environments with bi-weekly anti-systemic discrimination workshops which are grade specific.

NCYMH's virtual anti-systemic student workshops are a SAFE HAVEN and a STRONG SUPPORT for the bullied child and the child or youth who is bullying.

I Can't Breathe will bring a positive neutralized learning environment into schools, and will unify your classes, your workplaces and your communities and fill your communal spaces with understanding, positivity and the desire to learn and produce as a team for **SUCCESS**.

The National Collaboration for Youth Mental Health(NCYMH): www.ymhconference.ca) would like to provide these on-going anti-systemic discrimination workshops virtually to students on a bi-weekly basis and there is a measurement piece which is also available which will measure the link between anti-systemic discrimination and black student success.



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 population¹, 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

¹ 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?

Michèle Giroux
Executive Officer, Corporate Services

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* Survey¹. 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.

¹ 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	2.2	Elementary	0.8	Primary (K-3)	0.5	Junior (4-6)	0.9	Intermediate (7-8)	1.3	Secondary Senior (9-12)	1.5	Female	0.4	Male	1.6	Spec. Ed. Excluding Gifted	2.5	Low-SES	1.8	English Language Learners	1.7		
	Indigenous Self-ID		Race			Gender Identity			Disability															
	Does not identify as Indigenous	1.0	Métis	2.1	East Asian	0.2	South Asian	0.3	White	0.9	Girl or Woman	0.4	Boy or Man	1.6	Gender Diverse	1.9	Does not identify as having a disability	0.6	Autism Spectrum Disorder	2.7	Learning	2.7	Another	3.4
	First Nation	2.3			Black	1.8	Middle Eastern	2.0	Indigenous Race	3.5							Developmental	3.4	Mental Health	3.8	Addiction(s)	6.6		
Valuing Voices (Subset)	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.

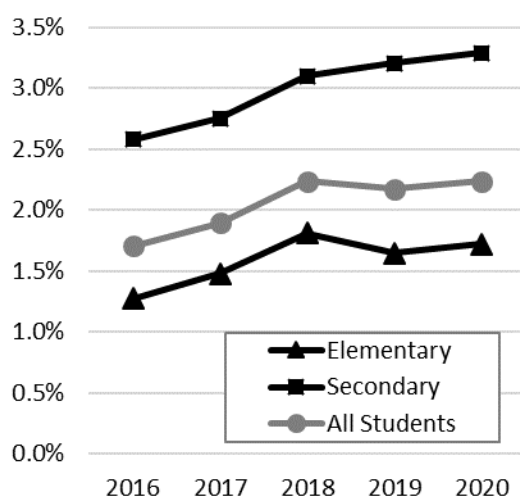
Table 1: Historical Overview of Enrolment and Suspension Data (September to March Break)

Student Enrolment	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<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
Total	71,571	72,492	73,571	74,972	74,854
Number of Suspensions Issued by Panel					
<i>Elementary</i>	899	1,167	1,426	1,274	1,305
<i>Secondary</i>	854	917	935	1,102	1,069
Total	1,753	2,084	2,361	2,376	2,374
Number of Students Suspended by Panel					
<i>Elementary</i>	606	719	888	815	866
<i>Secondary</i>	616	655	759	815	808
Total	1,222	1,374	1,647	1,630	1,674

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

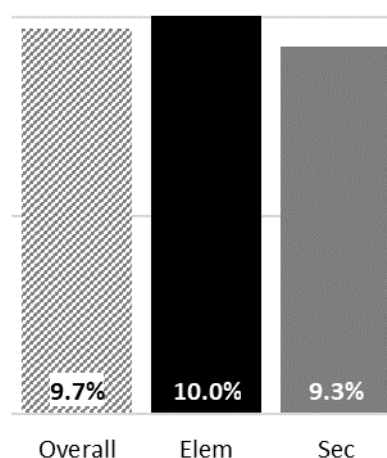
Why it matters: Suspensions are classified as either discretionary or mandatory based on the nature of the incident/grounds for suspension. Section 306 of the Education Act outlines circumstances where principals must consider suspension (i.e. discretionary suspensions), while Section 310 outlines the 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
All Suspensions	1,305	1,069	2,374
Rate of mandatory suspensions	10.0%	9.3%	9.7%

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

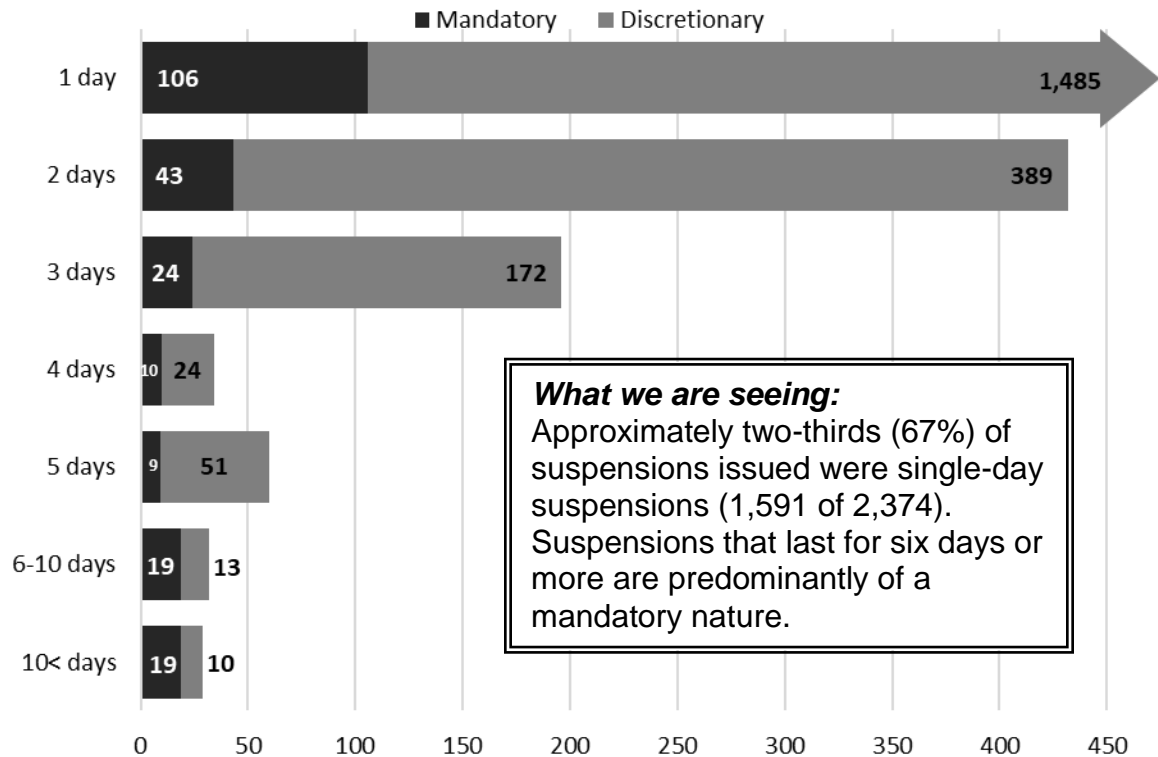
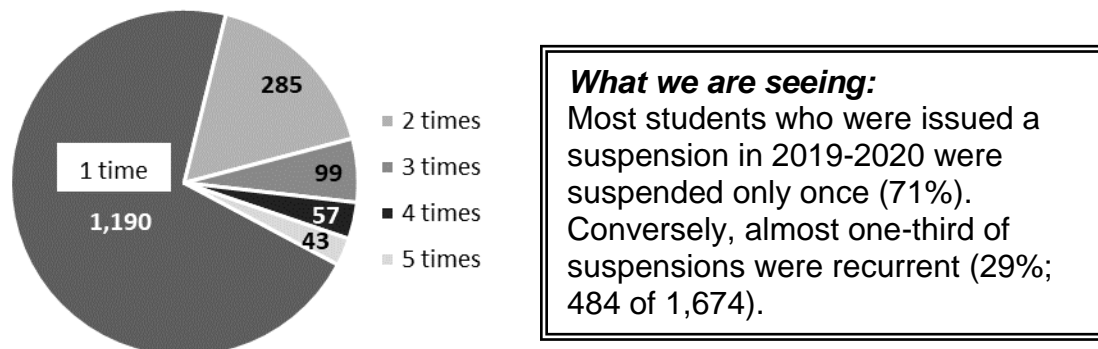


Figure 4. Number of Times a Student was Issued a Suspension During the School Year



Appendix A to Report No. 20-085

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

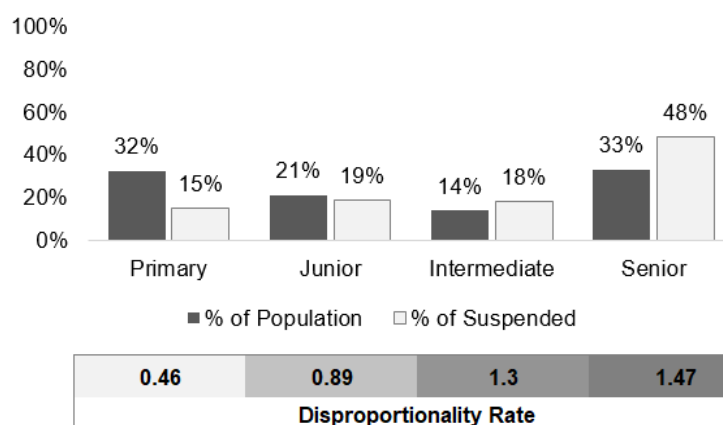
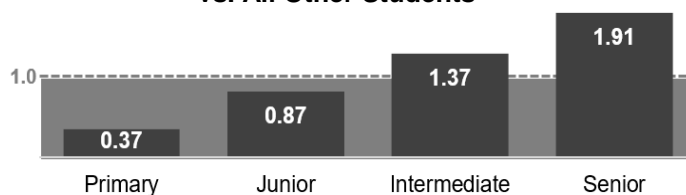
Why it matters: Given suspension data is reported at a District-level, there remain a lot of questions around which students might be most at risk. Providing this level of detail is important when considering school-level conversations. Given school structures vary throughout the District, exploring 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
Suspension Rate	1.0%	2.0%	2.9%	3.3%	2.2%

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).

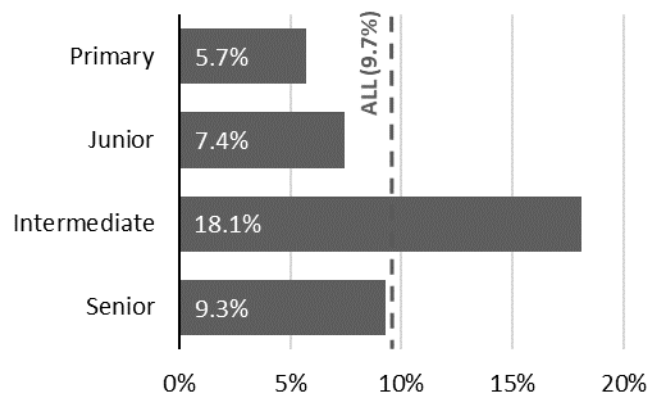
Figure 5. Distribution of Students by Panel**Figure 6. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students**

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
Number of Suspensions Issued by Type					
<i>Mandatory</i>	26	34	71	99	230
<i>Discretionary</i>	429	424	321	970	2,144
Total	455	458	392	1,069	2,374
Suspension Rate by Type					
<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?*²

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.

² 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)

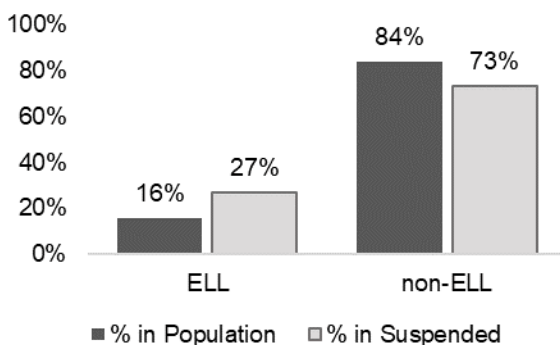
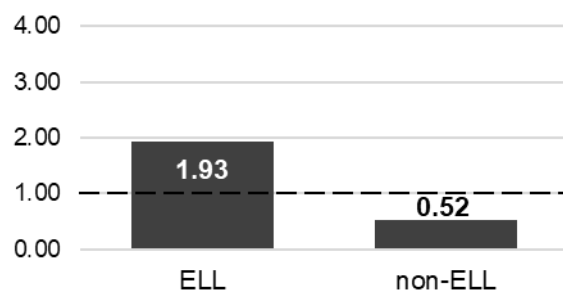


Figure 9. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students



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)

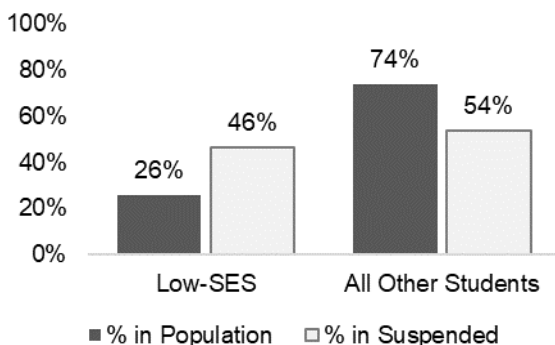
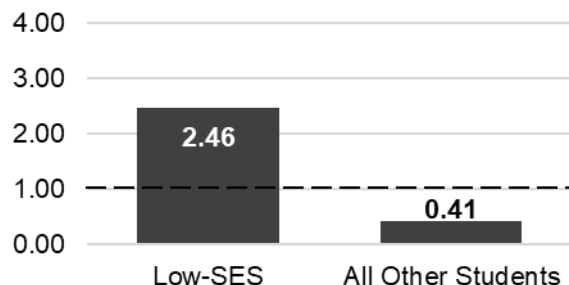


Figure 11. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students



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)

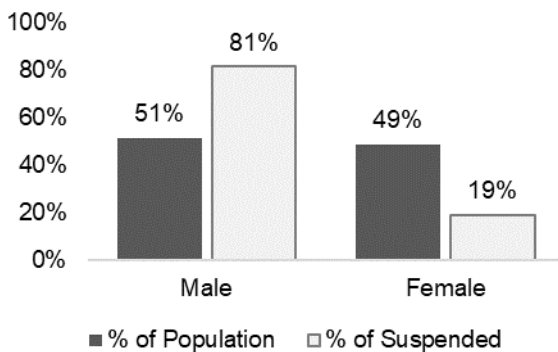
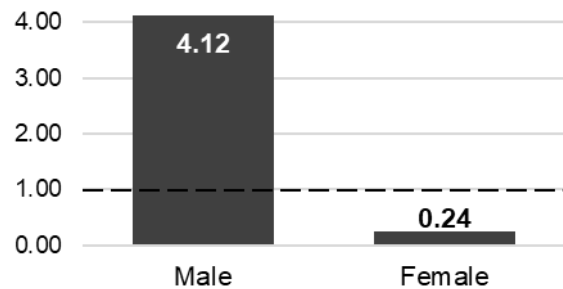





Figure 13. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students



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)

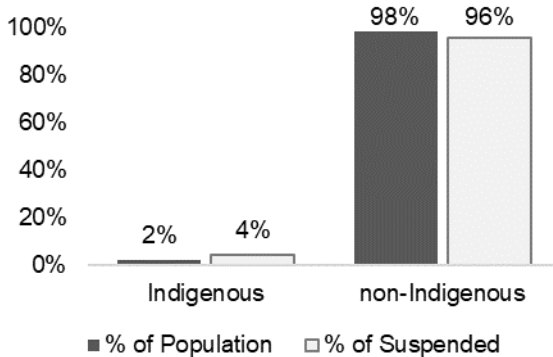
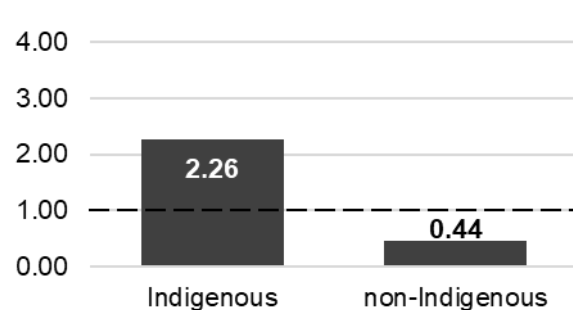






Figure 15. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students



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)

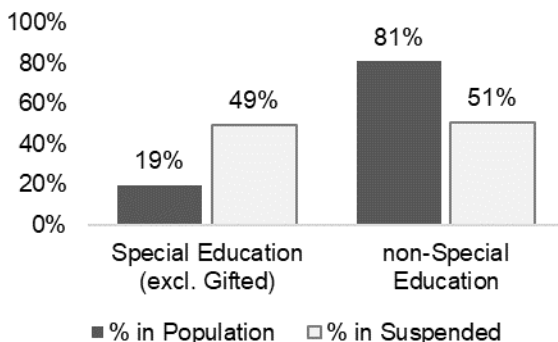
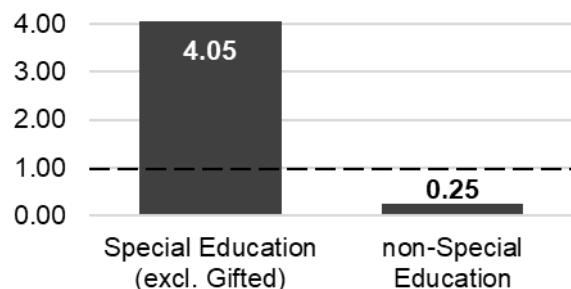
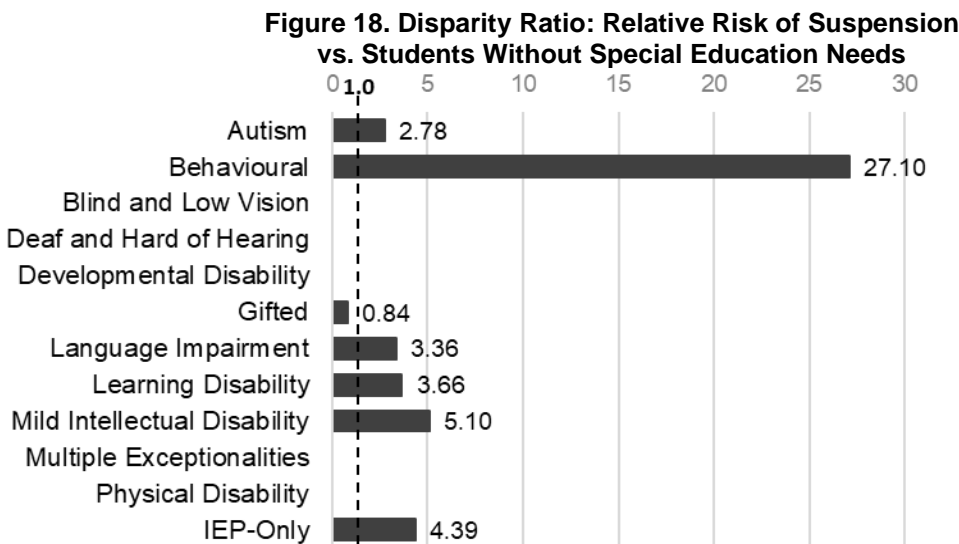


Figure 17. Disparity Ratio: Relative Risk of Suspension vs. All Other Students



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?
SUSPENSION RATES 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.
OUTCOMES 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>DISPROPORTIONALITY is a measure of a specific group's overrepresentation or underrepresentation in an outcome relative to their representation in the overall population.</p> <p>A DISPROPORTIONALITY RATE 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>Disproportionality 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>DISPARITY 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>A DISPARITY RATIO 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>Disparity 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>
A BENCHMARK 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.
A THRESHOLD 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

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.



POLICY P.010.GOV
TITLE: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ON BOARD STANDING COMMITTEES
Date Issued: 2 March 1998
Last Revised: 22 May 2018
Authorization: Board: 25 November 2014

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide the means through which representative groups in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board can actively participate in Board Standing Committee work.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1 The following organizations shall each have the right to appoint one non-voting representative to each of the Board's Standing Committees:
- a) Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC);
 - b) Ottawa-Carleton Student Presidents' Council or Students Trustees' Advisory Council (OCSPC or STAC);
 - c) Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
 - d) Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee (OCEOC);
 - e) Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators' Network (OCSSAN);
 - f) Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (1 representing Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation and Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Occasional Teachers' Association)
 - g) Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation District 25 (OSSTF – 1 representing both the Teachers Bargaining Unit and the Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit)
 - h) Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation District 25 (OSSTF Administrative and Support Groups – ESP/PSSU/PSSP/EA/PECCS – 1 representing the groups as determined by the groups)
 - i) Advisory Committee on Equity

- 2.2 The following organizations shall each have the right to appoint one non-voting representative to the Committee of the Whole Budget:
- a) Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC)
 - b) Ottawa-Carleton Student Presidents' Council or Students Trustees' Advisory Council (OCSPC or STAC)
 - c) Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
 - d) Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators' Network (OCSSAN)
 - e) Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee (OCEOC)
 - f) Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (1 representative from each of the following bargaining units)
 - (i) Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation
 - (ii) Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Occasional Teachers' Association
 - g) Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation District 25 (1 representative from each of the following bargaining units)
 - (i) Teachers Bargaining Unit
 - (ii) Educational Support Professionals (ESP)
 - (iii) Plant Support Staff Unit (PSSU)
 - (iv) Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP)
 - (v) Educational Assistants (EA)
 - (vi) Professional Educators and Child Care Staff Bargaining Unit (PECCS)
 - (vii) Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit
 - h) Union Exempt Staff
 - i) Advisory Committee on Equity
- 2.3 Organizations may also appoint an alternate to replace the named representative if the representative is unable to attend a meeting. Temporary substitution of a representative by a duly authorized alternate during the course of a meeting shall be allowed.
- 2.4 Annually, each organization is expected to notify the District (Board Services), of the name and contact information of their representative for each committee to which they have named a representative. In the event of a change in the named representative, the organization is expected to notify the District (Board Services), immediately.
- 2.5 Each representative will receive notice of all public meetings of his or her assigned committee, as well as all public agenda documents to be considered by the Committee.
- 2.6 Representatives may participate fully in the debates of the respective Committees on the same basis as a Trustee member, except that only Trustee members may make and vote on motions.

- 2.7 Organizations, as named in section 2.1 of this policy, which have an appointed representative on a committee will participate in discussion on an issue through their representative during the deliberation on the item and shall not appear before the committee as a delegation or as public questioner.

3.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

- 3.1 In accordance with the *Education Act*, representatives may not receive confidential materials or participate in closed sessions of Committees.

4.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Education Act, 1998, § 57.1, 171, 200-205

Ontario Regulation 464/97

Board By-laws and Standing Rules

Board Policy P.019.GOV: Special Education Advisory Committee

Board Policy P.008.GOV: Advisory Committee on Equity



POLICY P.111.GOV

TITLE: **ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR EXTENDED DAY AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

Date issued: 28 January 2014

Last revised:

Authorization: Board: 28 January 2014

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To establish an advisory committee for extended day and child care programs to assist the Board of Trustees to meet its commitment to the provision of quality programming in extended day and child care programs.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

- 2.1 **Day Care Programs** means programs which cater to children who are not yet of school-age (toddler, preschool) for whom care will be provided during the day, during the school year, and in the summer.
- 2.2 **Extended Day Program** means the program delivered to school-age children between the ages of 4 and 12 before school, after school, over the Christmas holidays, during March Break, and over the summer.
- 2.3 **Child Care Council** means the formal council of representative child care providers from across the city.
- 2.4 **Community Partners (Child Care Agencies)** means child care agencies who have entered in agreements with the District to deliver extended day or day care programs on behalf of the District.
- 2.5 **District** means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 The Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Day Care Programs shall:
 - a) Provide ongoing advice to the Board on the management, delivery and implementation of the extended day child care programs;
 - b) Advise with respect to the development of policy with regard to extended day programming and child care to ensure successful delivery of programming for early learners;

- c) Establish a forum for stakeholders to collaborate and share experience across related sectors;
- d) To be an advocacy voice for excellence in extended day initiatives across the District; and
- e) Ensure that the members and representatives have current public information about extended day, child care and full-day kindergarten to communicate to their communities in Ottawa.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

- 4.1 Participation in the Committee shall be voluntary and open to individual members of the District community and to stakeholder organizations with an interest in early learning programs.
- 4.2 The Committee shall be comprised of 16 members.
- 4.3 Voting members shall include:
 - a) Five parents of elementary school-age children enrolled in schools across the District to the extent possible to be broadly reflective of a diversity of school communities and a diversity of experiences with the extended day and child care programs offered in District schools;
 - b) One representative from the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC);
 - c) One representative from the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC);
 - d) One representative from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC); and
 - e) One representative from the Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE).
- 4.4 Non-voting members shall include:
 - a) One trustee as appointed by the Board of Trustees;
 - b) One Superintendent of Instruction or designate appointed by the Director;
 - c) One representative from the Child Care Council;
 - d) Three community partners (child care agencies); and
 - e) One representative from Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation Student Support Professionals Bargaining Unit.
- 4.5 Support staff to the Committee shall be assigned by the Director or designate and may include:
 - a) One elementary school principal;
 - b) System Principal of Early Learning; and
 - c) Manager of Early Learning.

Roles and Responsibilities of Members

- 4.6 All members of the committee shall:
- a) Demonstrate a commitment to the delivery of excellence in early learning and child care programs in the District through the work of the Committee;
 - b) Attend committee meetings;
 - c) Review all relevant material(s) prior to the meetings;
 - d) Participate in Committee and sub-committee work as required; and
 - e) Provide input and/or feedback and raise issues as is the duty of a representative of a Board Special Purpose, ad-hoc or advisory committee.
- 4.7 The Chair of the Committee shall:
- a) plan the agenda in consultation with the Superintendent of Instruction or designate;
 - b) chair the committee meetings;
 - c) act as the spokesperson and representative of the committee in communicating with the Director of Education, Board of Trustees and the public; and
 - d) review the minutes with the secretary before circulating them to members.

Term of Office

- 4.8 The term of office of a voting member shall be two years. The term of office will begin on December 01 and end November 30. Members may serve no more than two consecutive terms of office.

Elections and Appointments

- 4.9 Members of the committee shall be elected or appointed before the first committee meeting of the school year which shall be held no later than October 31 of each year.
- 4.10 The Committee shall:
- a) elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for one year from the voting community members for a one year term; and
 - b) subject to the election or appointment process, allow a member of the Committee to be re-elected or re-appointed to the position of Chair or Vice-Chair for more than one term.
- 4.11 The Committee shall review its membership annually. A membership sub-committee of three to five members that must include two members of the executive shall post a notice to initiate an "invitation of interest" for voting members and an application process for community and non-voting members.

Sub-Committee

- 4.12 The Committee shall establish a sub-committee to review its membership annually. The sub-committee shall include three to five members, including Chair and/or Vice-Chair.
- 4.13 The sub-committee shall establish a process for the appointment of new members which includes:

- a) expressions of interest from persons interested in being parent/guardian members;
 - b) expressions of interest from community partners (child care agencies);
 - c) requests for nominees to represent PIC, OCASC, SEAC and ACE and the Child Care Council; and
 - d) requests to the Director of Education or designate for the names of staff representatives on the Committee.
- 4.14 All notices, requests and invitations for expressions of interest shall include:
- a) a summary of the position, including the term of office of the appointment;
 - b) describe the process for making an application;
 - c) note the deadline for application;
 - d) provide the name and contact information of the person(s) responsible for managing the process; and
 - e) be posted through a variety of methods to ensure awareness of the application process throughout the jurisdiction of the District. Such methods may include, but are not restricted to, advertisements in District newsletters, advertisements in newspapers, notices in schools, notices on the District's website, and on school websites.
- 4.15 The sub-committee shall review all applications and shall make a recommendation to the Committee for appointments.
- 4.16 The Committee shall have final approval of the appointment of all voting members, and non-voting members, unless otherwise specified.

Vacancies

- 4.17 A vacancy in the membership of the Committee does not prevent the Committee from delivering on its mandate.
- 4.18 In the event that a voting member vacates his or her position during the appointed term, the Committee may appoint another individual to the position for the remainder of the term.
- 4.19 To replace a non-voting member, the Board or District shall appoint another individual to the position for the remainder of the term.

Meetings

- 4.20 The Committee shall meet at least six times per school year.
- 4.21 All meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public and be held in a location that is accessible.
- 4.22 Notice of each regular meeting shall be provided to all members of the Committee at least five days before the meeting. Notice may be by email, by telephone and/or by posting to the District website.

- 4.23 A meeting cannot achieve quorum unless a majority of voting members are present. Majority is 50 percent plus one.
- 4.24 Non-voting members of the Committee shall have all the rights and obligations of voting members except that they may not move, second, or vote on a motion and they are not part of the count for quorum.
- 4.25 The rules of order for the conduct of meetings shall be consistent with the OCDSB By-laws and Standing Rules.

Reporting Requirements

- 4.26 The Committee shall provide an annual report to the Board of Trustees in June of each year. This report shall summarize the activities and achievements of the Committee over the year and outline its plans for the upcoming year.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Education Act and Regulations

OCDSB By-laws and Standing Orders

Board Policy P.001.GOV: Policy Development and Management

Board Policy P.048.GOV: Board Guiding Principles

Board Policy P.065.GOV: Advisory Committees to the Board



ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY REPORT

October 29, 2020

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Voting Members:	Ayan Yusuf Karshe, Nasrin Mirbagheri-Javanfar, Nicki Dunlop, Seema Lamba, Bronwyn Funicello, Nicki Dunlop, Carrie-Lynn Barkley, Deepika Grover, Elizabeth Sweeney, Chandonette Johnson-Arowolo (Jaku Konbit), Ryan Doucette (Young Leaders Advisory Council), Kahmaria Pingue (Parents 4 Diversity)
Non-Voting Members:	Rob Campbell (Trustee), Chris Ellis (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee, ex officio), Bob Dawson, June Girvan, Yazhou Zhang, Ruth Sword, Susan Cowin (Special Education Advisory Committee), Inini McHugh (Indigenous Education Advisory Committee), David Wildman Ottawa Carleton Elementary Occasional Teachers Association (OCEOTA)
Staff and Guests:	Justine Bell (Trustee), Joy Liu (Student Trustee), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary-Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Melissa Collins (System Principal, Equity), Jacqueline Lawrence (Equity and Diversity Coordinator), Ken Mak (Vice Principal), Jeannine Bradley (Office Administrator) David Sutton (Educator), Donna Blackburn (Guest), Leigh Fenton (Board Coordinator)

1. Welcome

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

Acting Chair Deepika Grover called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. She acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on unceded Algonquin Territory and thanked the Algonquin people for hosting the meeting on their land. She called for a moment of silence to honour the memory of Abdirahman Abdi who died under the custody of the Ottawa Police Services. She asked that in the quiet, the committee consider the strong proactive community voices and leadership that continue to persevere in the pursuit of justice and fairness.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Nicki Dunlop,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Presentations

3.1 Report 20-090, Consultation Plan for Police Involvement in Schools

Superintendent Baker provided a high-level overview on the consultation plan for police involvement in schools. She noted that the consultation plan process was partially informed through discussions held at the Advisory Committee on Equity's (ACE) special purpose meeting of 28 September 2020. She indicated that the consultation plan will remain a standing item on all forward agendas for ACE. Staff are in the process of determining the process for the selection of the steering group. Ms. Lamba suggested that predominantly racialized staff be included in the steering group. Chair Grover requested more information on the membership of the steering group, as it becomes available. In addition, she suggested that the standing item could be an opportunity to review progress, deliver insights as they emerge and review documents as they are produced.

The Committee raised the protocols for engaging police services in schools, the areas of discretion and mandatory instances when police are summoned to the school, the compulsory training for the School Resource Officers (SRO), the concept of community offering alternative safety services, and the division in the understanding of justice in the city, in light of the not guilty ruling in the death of Adbirahman Abdi. Superintendent Baker concluded that the consultation review aims to examine these subjects, and will include the review of the role of the SRO. In response to an inquiry, she noted that she will bring forward to Superintendent Farrish, the suggestion of inviting former students to participate in the consultation process. To better understand these topics, Ms. Hayles suggested the following future guest presenters at ACE: a police officer and a human rights lawyer, who are independent of District employees or partnerships.

4. Reports

4.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Baker reported that at the Committee of the Whole meeting on 13 October 2020, the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights (IEHR) Division was launched. In addition, The Indigenous, Human Rights and Equity Roadmap 2020-2023 (the Roadmap) was presented. She noted that the District is presently moving forward on the commitments of the Roadmap. On 27 October 2020, the Board approved the creation of two full time equivalent (FTE) Indigenous Graduation Coaches positions, selected from an Indigenous candidate pool with expertise in the cultures of Inuit and Métis people, the expansion of the Equity

Team through an additional Equity Coach with a focus on Black, racialized, minoritized groups, and an allocation of up to \$50,000 annually to support translation services to communicate and support the implementation of the Roadmap. Trustee Bell reflected that the motion for additional Indigenous Graduation Coaches was accepted by the Board, due, in part, to a delegation given by a member of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC). She shared that during the meeting, Chair Scott proclaimed that delegation rules do not align with Indigenous ways of sharing knowledge and that Mr. McHugh would be allotted the time he needed to present his concerns to the Board of Trustees.

Superintendent Baker acknowledged the allegations against former staff at Nepean High School. She noted that an investigation is underway; staff is unable to share further details with the public.

Superintendent Smith reported that a support team was assembled to accommodate the needs of students at Nepean HS, including staff from IEHR and Learning Support Services (LSS). Connecting with the students and providing some urgent professional training for staff is the prime focus presently. Google Meets are scheduled for students to be working with a social worker, and itinerant educational assistant and the school psychologist. Small group opportunities will be available for students to connect directly with District administration. She and Principal Johnson sat with student leaders from the Diverse Student Union. In this meeting they were provided with information about the daily experiences of students who were racialized at Nepean HS and issues that impacted these students as a result of the school environment. Listening to the student voice is at the centre of the student support planning and outcomes were established from the meeting. Every three weeks, she and Principal Johnson will seek additional feedback from the Diverse Student Union.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- The lessons learned from the experiences of students at Nepean HS will influence the work that is underway for the Roadmap to take across the District and further the strategies designed for a series of learning opportunities involving school leaders;
- A way to file reports of inappropriate or racist teacher conduct will be made possible through an independent arm of the District, led by Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner. The Safe Schools policies and procedures will include the development of a complaint form that students may submit anonymously, identifying the kind of behaviour under scrutiny;
- A committee member contended that students may not be comfortable coming forward to speak about traumatic circumstances involving educators; therefore creating a position for an ombudsperson within the schools could lead to increased advocacy in matters of bullying and human rights violations;

- LSS partners have assigned a multi-disciplinary team to support affected Nepean HS students. These counsellors reflect the diversity of the students;
- A committee member stated that though encouraged at every opportunity, students should not be expected to advocate for themselves because they are children under the care of the District while on school property;
- A committee member expressed concern that the District approach to mending the damage experienced by Nepean HS students is largely a “top-down” strategy with complex power dynamics. Historically, many racialized students have struggled with the power dynamics in society;
- Superintendent Smith advised that these circumstances have highlighted many areas that require attention, for example, how to unlearn the ways in which white supremacy lives in actions and words, closely surveying the materials chosen to teach the curriculum and examining the dynamics that are set up in the classrooms;
- Support in the form of a three tiered structure was deployed for the students of Nepean HS after the District became aware of the allegations. Superintendent Smith noted that there was a personalized approach to supporting each of the students. Further information was requested about the tiered approach, and it was suggested that the information be communicated to the parents of the affected students;
- Parents of students affected by the words and actions of the past and present Nepean HS staff should be assured that the District is doing more than their legal obligation to investigate the allegations. Superintendent Smith noted that a communication plan to the community is forthcoming; and
- Superintendent Baker explained that during a tragic event a Tragic Event Response Team (TERT) is deployed to offer support through professional services and at times, spiritual workers arrive on location to support the school community, friends and siblings. The District continues care as long as the recipients believe that they require the support.

4.2 ACE Report 24 September 2020

Moved by Chandonette Johnson-Arowolo,

THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity Report of 24 September 2020 be received.

Carried

4.3 ACE Discussion Notes 28 September 2020

The ACE discussion notes of 28 September 2020 were received.

5. Information

5.1 Election Selection Process

Diversity Coordinator Lawrence presented a document which outlined the responsibilities and described the guidelines for the scheduled election at the 26 November 2020 ACE meeting. She asked that voting members send an expression of interest for the positions of Chair, Vice Chair and Committee of the Whole (COW) representative to her or Board Coordinator Fenton by 12 November 2020. The official start date of the presiding officer positions begins on 1 December 2020. In response to a query, she reviewed the history of the creation of ACE, which was also presented in the ACE orientation meeting of 27 August 2020.

The COW representative was described by Diversity Coordinator Lawrence, as a representative from ACE who attends a monthly meeting with the Board of Trustees. The concerns of ACE can be brought into the discussion periods. This representative would contribute to the conversation with an equity lens on matters brought forward and, in turn, report to ACE about matters that require feedback from the ACE committee. Trustee Ellis contributed that, in years previous, he wrote the recommendation to provide a seat for ACE at the COW table. He noted that this representative is of prime importance and will bring forward equity issues to the trustees or to present a perspective of diversity while the trustees are debating a particular matter. Trustee Scott maintained that the Board of Trustees is involved in steering the change within the institutional structures to better reflect diversity. The formality of the Board of Trustee meeting setting should not be a deterrent as the trustees rely on hearing all experiences in order to make their decisions. The key consideration is that the representative brings forth the views of ACE rather than individual views. The representative will speak at COW defining the consensus position of ACE and ask questions of clarification to be better equipped to report back to ACE. Trustee Campbell highlighted that ACE may formulate a motion and bring it to the table for the Board of Trustees to consider.

Ms. Hayles suggested that a motion be recommended to the Board of Trustees to appoint an Algonquin member as a Board Trustee. Staff noted that trustees are not appointed but rather they are elected. Trustee Ellis noted that *Ontario Regulation 462/97 First Nations Representation on Boards* outlines the requirements for First Nations appointments to the Board. The District does not qualify for this provision.

Mr. McHugh, who attends ACE as a representative for the IEAC, queried the likelihood of granting every person attending ACE a legitimate vote. Diversity Coordinator Lawrence responded that the question has been raised in previous years. ACE is a unique body with a variety of diverse voices and individuals that share different ways of knowing. She established that advisory committees of the Board operate through structured policy. The committee exists through the discretion of the Board. She suggested that after the 2020-2021 school year, a recommendation from ACE may come forth to revise Policy P.008.GOV to better serve the diverse voices and identities that attend and participate at ACE. In

response to an inquiry about including a person from the Algonquin nation on the list of voting members, she noted that the membership sub-committee conducted an extensive outreach to solicit applicants and to arrive at the current ACE membership. She maintained that each voice who attends is respected and welcome; the richness of the conversation relies on contributions from the group. Ms. Lamba iterated that the P.008.GOV allows for the creation of various sub-committees should an area of business require greater focus by a selection of committee members.

Ms. Javanfar noted that the member application process occurred in 2019 and then in 2020 applicants began to receive notifications pertaining to upcoming ACE meetings. She understood that the length of the membership is two years however she did not understand the distinction of the different member categories on ACE. She noted that she was not a parent of a child currently enrolled in the District; however she is a voting member in the independent category. She requested more information about how the ACE conversations are connected to tangible change within the school system. Diversity Coordinator Lawrence explained that many staff are assigned to ACE, including the Equity Instructional Coach, Sue Rice and they have a direct connection with all schools and may share outcomes from ACE discussions at the school-level. The meeting reports are published as part of the COW agenda packages and all trustees are accountable for reading the advisory committee reports, in turn informing trustees of the community voice and the matters requiring further attention at the Board-level. Superintendent Baker emphasized that ACE is the advisory committee on equity to the Board.

Ms. Sweeney requested clarity on the appointments to the eleven voting positions as P.008.GOV is written with the provision that only voting members may hold the positions of Chair, Vice Chair and COW representative. Diversity Coordinator Lawrence responded that non-voting members are able to self-nominate to sit on the sub-committees of ACE. This provides an opportunity for all to share time and talent to the committee if they seek a larger role. She acknowledged the two vacancies in the community representative voting member category. It was noted that in the non-voting 'Members at Large' category, participants who also represent community agencies, may be approached to fill these vacancies. Alternatively, a listing of organizations and associations within P.008.GOV may be considered.

Ms. Miller examined section 4.6.(a) under "Membership Criteria" where the language reads: "Every effort shall be made to ensure that the four (4) individual members are parents/guardians with children enrolled in the OCDSB who represent the diverse demographic composition of the District". She inquired how many of the four voting members were parents with children enrolled in the District. It was determined that 25% of the independent voting members were parents. Ms. Javanfar stated that those members who are the parents with students in the District should have the voting privileges. It was established that

75% of independent members in the 'alternative' voting column were parents with children in the OCDSB. The Committee agreed that a balance between parents with children currently enrolled in the District schools and those without, was a preferred membership structure.

Ms. Sweeney queried the mechanism in place to expand the voting membership within P.008.GOV. Superintendent Baker replied that the District will be conducting a review of all policies relating to the Board's advisory committees in 2020-2021. Though the committee policy can be amended and presented to the Board, she was concerned about the timeline, as the ACE elections occur on 26 November 2020. She assured the committee that ACE arrives at their decisions by consensus. Trustee Scott communicated that ACE will be asked for input in the fulsome review planned for the advisory committees.

5.2 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.

Ms. Hayles requested consistency in the way Black people are referred to throughout the document. Superintendent Baker clarified that, in consultation with Diversity Coordinator Lawrence, Black people are distinguished as Caribbean Black in the Roadmap.

6. New Business or Event Announcements

There was no new business raised.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Deepika Grover, Acting Chair, Advisory Committee on Equity