

## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

**April 22, 2021**

**6:00 pm**

**Zoom Meeting**

Members:	Albert Dumont, Inini McHugh, Monique Manatch, Jo VanHooser, Nina Stanton, Lili Miller, Romaine Mitchell, Marlene Souliere, Elena Abel (Parent)
Indigenous Education Staff:	Jody Alexander (Vice-Principal, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education), Kyl Morrison
Other Staff and Guests:	Wendy Hough (Non-Voting Trustee Delegate for IEAC), Justine Bell (Trustee), Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Reg Lavergne (System Principal of Instruction and Innovation), Joan Oracheski (Manager, Research, Evaluation and Analytics Division) Nicole Guthrie (Manager, Board Services), Leigh Fenton (Board/Committee Coordinator), Wayne Alrout, Sonia-Nadon Campbell (Special Education Advisory Committee Representative on the Indigenous Education Advisory Council)

### **1. Opening (Elder Albert Dumont)**

Elder Albert Dumont opened the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

### **2. Student Voice**

A student was welcomed into the meeting.

### **3. Community Discussion**

#### **3.1 Algonquin Meeting Protocols**

The Algonquin meeting protocols were presented by Elder Dumont and Ms. Manatch, who created and developed the protocols, governing the gatherings held by the Indigenous Education Advisory Council. It was noted that the intention is to bring the protocols to Indigenous communities for further consultation. The protocols will be updated as required. (Appendix A)

Ms. Miller shared that she felt that the established protocols were important. She noted that the document was written by Elders therefore she was reluctant to add more feedback about the document. She

suggested that in order to engage more Indigenous parents, they must be able to come to a meeting without a commitment at first. Under the section heading "Guests", the third bullet specified that parents must make a request to come to IEAC. Ms. Manatch indicated that she will clarify the protocol around parents attending to extend an open invitation to Indigenous parents of students at the District.

Ms. Abel noted that the protocol document offers an opportunity to share teachings. For example, the concept of the consensus approach can be expanded to share the Indigenous systems of governance. Ms. Manatch agreed that providing a background to the Indigenous value system is important.

Vice Principal Alexander showed her appreciation for the Elders who created the Algonquin protocols. She contributed that in meetings she supports Elder's having the "first say" and to make space for students and the voice of youths. Ms. Manatch agreed that the student and youth voice must be prioritized.

Trustee Bell recalled the story in the IEAC meeting of 21 January 2021, where Elder Dumont shared that in former times when a stranger approached Indigenous territory, a scout would be sent to report to the nation to assure them whether or not the stranger had designs upon their peace. Trustee Bell's assumption was that trustees were visitors to the IEAC. She was grateful to be allowed to state her intention and understood that a discussion amongst the Elders regarding an invitation would ensue, for each request to attend. Should the decision be that the invitation would not be extended, as the presence of a White person may not contribute to a safe space for Indigenous participation in the meeting, she stated that she would be respectful of that decision and hoped that other guests would be as well.

Ms. Manatch noted that the protocols will be appended to each IEAC agenda with the revisions. More developments to the Algonquin protocols are intended.

#### **4. Presentations**

##### **4.1 Report 21-014, Student Achievement: Focus on Grade 10 Credit Accumulation (M. Giroux)**

Your Council had before it Report 21-014, presenting data on student achievement, which includes analysis using demographic data from the *Valuing Voices – Identity Matters! Student Survey* conducted in 2019-2020 to identify student success based on grade 10 credit accumulation and the differences in credit accumulation rates across groups of students, based on demographic characteristics.

Analyzing credit accumulation data informs the District's Improvement Plans for Student Achievement and Well-being, serves as a key metric in monitoring progress at the District and school level, and helps to target interventions for individual students through re-engagement, credit rescue, and credit recovery for assistance towards graduation.

With the introduction of the *Anti-Racism Act (2017)*, *Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism (2018)*, additional analyses are required to calculate disproportionality and/or disparity to better understand the magnitude of overrepresentation and underrepresentation of particular identities in a particular program or service, as well as differences in outcomes between groups of students. This change in reporting practice offers an opportunity to explore the implications of decisions made at each step of the process and bring in community perspective through the representatives who sit on the Technical Advisory Group (TAG).

Staff continues to be guided by the QuantCrit Framework. Through this framework, results may be interpreted differently depending upon experiences that individuals have had and the worldview they hold. As results and interpretations are presented, Manager Oracheski encouraged the membership to think about alternative interpretations to the results that are being presented.

For many years, students, parents, and community partners have raised concerns that racialized students, students of diverse gender identities, and students with disabilities face barriers to graduation. Based on the analysis of data for this subset of students, a disproportionate underrepresentation exists particularly for:

- Students who identify as First Nations, Metis, and Inuit;
- Those who identify with an undisclosed disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and/or addiction;
- Those who identify as transgender, gender fluid, gender non-conforming; and
- Indigenous, Black, Middle Eastern and Latino students

All groups are underrepresented in the group of students who had earned a minimum of 16 credits by the end of their grade 10 year. Students who identified as Indigenous were the most underrepresented and 0.7 times as likely as non-Indigenous students to be on track to graduate within 5 years of starting secondary school. For those students who identify as Indigenous, 57% of those surveyed will have earned 16 or more credits by grade 10.

Manager Orcheski reported that the analysis of student achievement data and other outcomes allows the District to identify patterns and trends, and monitor progress towards improving outcomes for all students, including the dismantling of systemic barriers and biases that preclude students from reaching their full potential. Critical components to this work are the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023, student success initiatives, and providing support to schools to engage in dialogue with students, staff, and the broader community to better understand the barriers students may be facing at the school level that could be contributing to these district-level outcomes.

System Principal Lavergne reported on the specific initiatives in Student Success, Innovation and Adolescent Learning.

Some of the key initiatives planned, or being undertaken, include:

- Graduation coaches supporting Indigenous and Black students;
- The Summer Learning Program was introduced in 2020 to support Indigenous students in the attainment of credits;
- The Annual Equity Accountability report to support monitoring of the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap;
- Additional resources have been allocated to schools where credit attainment has been below average;
- The Authentic Student Learning Experience Tool (ASLE), an OCDSB innovation, moves beyond completing missing assignments but focuses on student voice and recovery plans that take into account the student interests; and
- School-Within-A-College (SWAC) re-engages high school students by inviting them to participate in a collaborative learning experience at Algonquin College, to help them thrive in a college-setting independently. In the program, there is a connection to the Centre of Accessible Learning.

System Principal Lavergne reported on a shift to the funding model to support student credit accumulation. An envelope of \$74,000 was provided to Occasional Teacher (OT) support to ensure credit completion during the first four months of the 2020-2021 school year. Another \$50,000 has been allocated for credit attainment support. He also noted that Communications staff is drafting a multi-lingual letter which will provide parental support on how to make decisions regarding grade 9 pathways.

System Principal Lavergne highlighted the "Project True North " being piloted in ten schools, which is an example of experiential learning to enhance equity. He summarized the next steps in supporting student success as: providing multilingual information to parents to help them make the best decisions for their children, using experiential learning to enhance equity and to build meaningful community partnerships, expanding the pilot for Project True North to begin research on Indigenous soldiers who served in Canadian wars, expanding the use of ASLE and continuing to review and prioritize student success funding. The Superintendent of Instruction and Innovation, Mr. Eric Hardie, intends to collaborate with Vice Principal Alexander on co-building an experiential learning package for Indigenous students, developed in collaboration with Indigenous student voices.

In response to questions during the presentation and in discussion the following points were noted:

- A deeper understanding of how credits are accumulated, either through regular classes or targeted initiatives, would need to be part of a future analysis of credit accumulation;
- The Research, Evaluation, Analytics Division (READ) disaggregates credit accumulation data once the school year has been completed;
- System Principal Lavergne confirmed that the two new Indigenous Graduation Coaches were assigned to Canterbury High School and Ottawa Technical Secondary School (OTSS). He committed to connecting with Vice Principal Alexander to explore a plan for graduation coach support to other schools. Gloucester High School and OTSS, have dedicated Indigenous graduation coaches supporting Indigenous students.
- Student success teachers support credit recovery and intervention work for all university-level or applied-level courses; and
- In response to a query from Ms. Manatch, Superintendent Smith indicated that she would verify that the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) courses are available and accessible to the students who are enrolled in the Urban Aboriginal Alternate High School.

Ms. Stanton emphasized the importance of providing the entire story of the 4000 Indigenous soldiers who participated in World Wars and the equities they faced when they returned to their land, such as their Indigenous status being revoked. She stated that at least thirty-seven Indigenous soldiers were decorated with medals of bravery; however it was only much later that they were recognized publicly for their contributions. There is debate within Indigenous communities as to whether or not the wars that were fought were their wars to fight in. She

encouraged an honest lens of Canada to be portrayed when researching the experiences of Indigenous soldiers. System Principal Lavergne affirmed that the purpose of "Project True North" was to discover the truth behind the experiences of the veterans.

Ms. Mantach asserted that for any exercise involving the lives and experiences of Indigenous people, participation from the Indigenous community at-large was paramount. System Principal Lavergne concurred that this project will be undertaken by working directly with members of the Indigenous community. Ms. Mantach requested to learn more about the identity of the members of the community and the planned outreach strategies. She used the mantra "Nothing About Us Without Us".

Elder Dumont was interested to learn how many Indigenous students went from being in residential schools into uniform and sent to fight in Europe during the First and Second World Wars. He noted that he was aware that many Algonquin people died at the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the Dieppe Raid.

Ms. VanHooser remarked that in her experience of working as the only Indigenous staff member of the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa, many Indigenous children in her care suffer from being taught too much Western knowledge and Western truths about history. She proposed reaching out to those Indigenous secondary students who are failing to provide them with information about the Urban Aboriginal Alternate High School Program. At these schools the alternative program fosters land-based learning opportunities for students who have become disengaged in traditional high school settings.

Discussion ensued and the Council agreed that land-based teaching could be further explored in the District, with the creation of outdoor schools.

Superintendent Smith acknowledged that as a school community it would be beneficial to re-imagine how the land can be incorporated into learning and credit attainment. She agreed that outdoor spaces can be used more intentionally in teaching.

In response to a query from Mr. McHugh, Trustee Hough stated that she saw value in a delegation about the subject of outdoor schools. She noted that a discussion will set the stage for the potential solution to the need. She suggested that Mr. McHugh and Ms. VanHooser present a delegation. Trustee Scott noted that the elected IEAC representatives for the Committee of the Whole and Committee of the Whole, Budget will become the voices of IEAC at those meetings and therefore a delegation could appear before a Board of Trustee meeting.

## **5. Reports**

### **5.1 Indigenous Education Team Update**

There was no report from the Indigenous Education Team.

## **5.2 21 January 2021, IEAC Report**

Moved by Mr. McHugh,

THAT the Indigenous Education Advisory Council Report dated 21 January 2021 be received.

Ms. Manatch queried the stage of development of the Equitable Recruitment and Hiring Policy. Superintendent Smith reported that she anticipates that the approval of the policy is imminent. Ms. Manatch noted that in-meeting she and Ms. VanHooser had offered to assist Superintendent McCoy with the language in the procedure that will accompany the policy. Superintendent Smith committed to connecting with Superintendent McCoy regarding the offer to support the procedure development.

Trustee Scott added that if members of the council had further comments on the Equitable Recruitment and Hiring Policy they could communicate them to Superintendent McCoy or to a trustee.

In response to a query, Superintendent Smith confirmed that consultations are in progress for input into a District Human Rights Policy.

**Moved by Mr. McHugh,**

**THAT the Indigenous Education Advisory Council Report dated 21 January 2021 be received.**

**Carried**

## **5.3 Superintendent's Report**

- a. OCDSB Letter to the Minister of Education to allow the Appointment of an Indigenous Trustee

Trustee Scott shared that a letter to the Minister of Education, Stephen Leece, to appoint an Indigenous trustee to the Ottawa Carleton District School Board of Trustees was sent on 21 April 2021. In the letter, she highlighted that the District has many students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit and an unknown number of students who have not self-identified. The District does not have agreements with any First Nations band or council for the provision of education and the District does not have the proportion of students that would qualify the making of an agreement under current Ontario Regulation 462/97. The piece of correspondence made reference to the Indigenous Education and Human Rights Roadmap and the District commitment to the Report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, along with the United

Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The letter imparted the value of an Indigenous trustee position on the Board, for both the Indigenous community and especially for Indigenous students.

Ms. Manatch queried the timeline to receive a response. Mr. Mitchell offered to follow-up on news of the letter with the Manager of the Government of Ontario's Indigenous Education Office.

## **6. Elections and Appointments**

Manager Guthrie explained the process for appointing members to the various representative positions, in the absence of an Algonquin way of electing council members. Mr. McHugh commented that the board procedures for elections were confusing and he was thankful to have received that election preparation documentation in advance of the meeting. He suggested that, in future, the council return to a traditional way of appointing someone to a position. Manager Guthrie noted that, in consultation with Ms. Manatch, the current board procedures would apply to the elections for Committee of the Whole and Committee of the Whole, Budget representatives; however Algonquin election protocols are to be developed for future IEAC elections.

### **6.1 Committee of the Whole**

Mr. McHugh, seconded by Ms. Stanton, nominated Ms. Miller for the position of the IEAC representative to the Committee of the Whole.

Ms. Miller nominated Mr. McHugh, Mr. McHugh declined the nomination.

**Moved by Trustee Hough, seconded by Mr. McHugh,**

**THAT the nominations be closed.**

**Carried**

By acclamation, Manager Guthrie declared Ms. Miller, Committee of the Whole primary representative of IEAC.

Mr. McHugh, seconded by Ms. Souliere, nominated Ms. VanHooser for the position of the IEAC alternate representative to the Committee of the Whole.

**Moved by Trustee Hough, seconded by Mr. McHugh,**

**THAT the nominations be closed.**

**Carried**

By acclamation, Manager Guthrie declared Ms. VanHooser, Committee of the Whole alternate representative of IEAC.

### **6.2 Committee of the Whole, Budget**



Mr. McHugh, seconded by Ms. Miller, nominated Ms. Stanton for the position of the IEAC representative to the Committee of the Whole, Budget.

Ms. Manatch, seconded by Ms. Miller, nominated herself for the position of the IEAC representative to the Committee of the Whole, Budget.

**Moved by Trustee Hough, seconded by Ms. Miller,**

**THAT the nominations be closed.**

**Carried**

Each candidate spoke about their interest in working with the Committee of the Whole, Budget Committee.

Following an election, Coordinator Fenton declared Ms. Stanton, Committee of the Whole, Budget representative of IEAC.

Ms. Stanton, seconded by Ms. VanHooser, nominated Ms. Manatch for the position of the IEAC alternate representative to the Committee of the Whole, Budget.

**Moved by Trustee Hough, seconded by Mr. McHugh,**

**THAT the nominations be closed.**

**Carried**

By acclamation, Manager Guthrie declared Ms. Manatch, Committee of the Whole, Budget alternate representative of IEAC.

## **7. Information and Invitation**

### **7.1 Proposed Council Meeting Dates for School Year 2021-2022**

The IEAC meeting schedule for the school year 2021-2022 was presented in draft form.

Ms. McHugh recommended that should the Minister of Education continue the stay at home order for the 2021-2022 school year, that IEAC meet each month of the school year. This recommendation was approved by consensus.

## **8. Closing (Elder Albert Dumont)**

Elder Dumont offered a closing at 8:30 p.m.