

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

November 18, 2021

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Members:	Albert Dumont, Inini McHugh, Monique Monatch, Jennifer Lord, Nina Stanton, Lili Miller, Romaine Mitchell
Indigenous Education Staff:	Jody Alexander (Vice-Principal, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education)
Other Staff and Guests:	Wendy Hough (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Sonia-Nadon Campbell (Special Education Advisory Committee Representative), Darren Gatley (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Opening (Elder Albert Dumont)

Elder Albert Dumont opened the meeting.

2. Student Voice

There were no students present.

System Vice-Principal Alexander provided an update from the Original Voices Youth Council and advised that many students have returned to in-person learning and that students are frustrated meeting virtually, preferring to have in-person gatherings. She noted that many students have evening jobs that impact their availability in attending sessions provided by the Indigenous Education Learning Team and the ability to participate in Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC).

Members noted that students in elementary grades are at an important developmental stage and require positive social interaction. Members suggested that educators should take notice of students who may not be engaging with other students and build relationships with them to help them gain self-esteem and confidence to develop friendships with their peers.

3. Community Discussion

Several members expressed concern that they were contacted by the media regarding the Indigenous Education Advisory Council's discussion at the 21 October 2021 meeting on the structure of the national anthem and the impact on Indigenous students.

Elder Dumont noted that future inquiries from the media should be directed to him.

Members engaged in a private discussion and requested that the conversation not be included in the meeting minutes.

4. Presentations

There were no presentations.

5. Reports

5.1 Indigenous Education Team Update

Members requested that the ensuing discussion not be included in the meeting minutes.

5.2 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Smith reported that secondary school report cards will be distributed by 23 November 2021. She noted that families will need to verify email addresses with their school in order to receive report cards.

Superintendent Smith noted that on 25 November 2021, staff from Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services will participate in an OCDSB Speaker Series event. She advised that the discussion will focus on helping youth maintain a balanced use of technology.

Superintendent Smith reported that 20 November 2021 is Transgender Day of Remembrance and further information can be found by contacting Kusha Dadui, the OCDSB's Trans and Gender Diverse Student Support Coordinator. Superintendent Smith noted that 20 November 2021 is also World Children's Day. She advised that this commemorative date was established in 1954 to promote international togetherness and to improve children's welfare worldwide.

Superintendent Smith reported that from 21-27 November 2021, schools across Ontario will recognize Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week.

In response to a query, Superintendent Smith noted that School Within a College (SWAC) is an opportunity where the District has partnered with Algonquin College to enable OCDSB students to complete both high-school and college credits. She advised that she would provide an update on this pathway to IEAC members at the 20 January 2022 meeting.

5.3 IEAC Report, 21 October 2021

The Indigenous Education Advisory Council report of 21 October 2021 was received.

5.4 Smudging Practices in Schools (Jody Alexander)

System Vice-Principal Alexander reported that the Smudge Protocol was created in 2019 and remains in draft form. She noted that she has made a request to another school board to view their protocol.

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

- System Vice-Principal Alexander will report back at a future meeting on which school board was requested to provide their smudging protocols;
- Members suggested that a similar protocol could be considered for the lighting of the Qulliq lamp and that a cultural support worker could assist as necessary;
- The discussion on the smudging protocol will be continued at the 20 January 2022 IEAC meeting,
- A presentation on the smudging protocol and process could be extended to maintenance staff at schools to ensure that the protocols are followed;
- Efforts for students to be able to smudge indoors are underway. Schools are looking to provide smudging spaces, such as a room with windows for ventilation;
- Members suggested that woodworking classrooms or school kitchens could be considered as these spaces have existing ventilation capabilities;
- A list of schools with dedicated smudging space could be created. Knowing that there are available or dedicated spaces would allow Indigenous students to feel more comfortable in participating in the smudging practice;
- Members suggested that there could be a dedicated day where everyone has an opportunity to participate in smudging. This could also be extended to include the lighting of the Qulliq lamp; and
- Members expressed concern that Indigenous students who choose to not stand for the singing of O Canada may become the target of bullying. It was suggested that a process could be developed to ensure targeted bullying does not occur and could be further discussed at the 20 January 2022 IEAC meeting.

5.5 Algonquin Protocols (Monique Manatch)

This item was deferred to the 20 January 2022 IEAC meeting.

6. Information

6.1 Upcoming Meeting Dates

The following meeting dates for the Indigenous Education Advisory Council were provided for information:

- 20 January 2022
- 17 February 2022
- March 2022 (TBD)
- April 2022 (TDB)
- 19 May 2022

7. Closing (Elder Albert Dumont)

Elder Dumont offered a closing and the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.