

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

**Tuesday, January 17, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

**Board Room  
Administration Building  
133 Greenbank Road  
Ottawa, Ontario**

- Trustees Present:** Justine Bell, Alysha Aziz, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Jennifer Jennekens, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, Lynn Scott, Antong Hou (Student Trustee)
- Staff Present:** Michele Giroux (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director of Education), Randy Gerrior (Associate Director, Business Operations), James Proulx (Executive Officer, Information Technology and Digital Transformation), Prince Duah (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Paula Hall (Superintendent of People, Culture and Leadership), Amy Hannah (Superintendent of Instruction), Reg Lavergne (Superintendent of Instruction), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Instruction), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel, Superintendent of Labour Relations, Risk Management and Privacy), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Karyn Carty Ostafichuk (Manager, Planning), Stacey Kay (Manager, Learning Support Services), Pamela LeMaistre (Manager, Human Resources), Joan Oracheski (Manager, Quality Assurance, Research Evaluation & Analytics Division), Sandra Owens (Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (Manager, Communications & Information Services), Andrea Rahim (Strategic Business Analyst), Nicole Guthrie (Manager of Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Central Audio/Visual Technical Specialist), Marco Paladino (Training & Support Specialist), James Baker (Board/Committee Coordinator)
- Non-Voting Representatives Present:** Dr. Maggie Mamen (SEAC), Suzanne Lyon (PIC), Seema Lamba (ACE), Tom Holloway (OCASC), Pat Dixon (OCEOTA-ALT), Lili Miller (IEC), Steven Spidell (OCSSAN), Rebecca Zuckerbrodt (OCETFO), Nathalie Sharma (EOC-ALT)

1. Call to Order - Vice-Chair of the Board

Vice-Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Vice-Chair Bell acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Homelands and thanked the Algonquin Nations for hosting the meeting on their land.

3. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Trustee Dickson,**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**Carried**

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were filed.

5. Delegations

5.1 Elizabeth Bolton, re Jewish Equity Coach

Rabbi Bolton shared that she is appearing at the request of Trustee Kaplan-Myrth to show support for the motion to hire a Jewish Equity Coach. She expressed concern about antisemitism, how the atmosphere within schools is impacting students, and the need for student support.

5.2 Andrea Freedman, re Jewish Equity Coach

Andrea Freedman shared community concerns about the lived experiences of Jewish students affected by antisemitism. She explained that a Jewish Equity Coach would be a helpful resource in understanding the lived experiences of Jewish students.

5.3 Sam Hersh, re Jewish Equity Coach

Sam Hersh expressed concern that antisemitism exists in society and that the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) needs to resist antisemitic violence.

In response to a query, Mr. Hersh noted that discrimination towards people of colour and antisemitism are not the same.

5.4 Greg Macdougall, re Air Quality in Classrooms

Greg Macdougall stressed the importance of considering the impact of the long term effects caused by COVID-19 on young people. Mr. Macdougall recommended that the OCDSB become a leader in better classroom ventilation through the use of Corsi-Rosenthal boxes.

5.5 Amichai Wise, re Jewish Equity Coach

Amachai Wise, the father of two OCDSB students, expressed concern regarding the gap in the curriculum pertaining to the impact of Jewish people during the Second World War. Mr. Wise expressed his support for the hiring of a Jewish Equity Coach.

5.6 Diana Ralph, re Jewish Equity Coach

Diana Ralph noted that she is a learning coordinator at a local synagogue where she provides training with respect to antisemitism and that she supports the motion for a Jewish Equity Coach.

In response to a query, Ms. Ralph expressed the view that the Jewish Equity Coach would work in collaboration with other coaches and equity staff to address all forms of discrimination.

5.7 David Baker, re Jewish Equity Coach

David Baker is the father of an OCDSB student who has experienced antisemitism at school. He expressed the view that a Jewish Equity Coach is necessary to avoid further victimization of students and to better support students and families who are subjected to this kind of experience.

In response to a query, Mr. Baker stated that acts of antisemitism are an ongoing concern and encouraged greater transparency and accountability from both staff and the Board.

5.8 Eytan Kenter, re Jewish Equity Coach

Rabbi Eytan Kenter expressed concern regarding rising rates of antisemitism. Rabbi Kenter expressed the view that antisemitism is comparable to other forms of discrimination and that he supports the motion to hire a Jewish Equity Coach.

5.9 Idan Scher, re Jewish Equity Coach

Rabbi Idan Scher expressed concern about the rise in antisemitism and suggested that the OCDSB has allowed the problem to get out of hand. He further suggested that the Board needs guidance from those with lived experience in order to fight antisemitism.

6. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Chair Lyra Evans reported that:

- Shingwàkons Public School opened during the week of 9 January 2023 and is one of five new school construction projects underway;
- Construction continues on the new elementary schools in Half Moon Bay and Findlay Creek and secondary schools in Stittsville and Riverside South;

- The OCDSB kindergarten registration commenced in January 2023 and that all children who turn four years of age in 2023 are encouraged to register;
- Parent information sessions were held in January and February of 2023 about kindergarten at elementary schools across the District. "Welcome to School" information sessions will be also be held at secondary schools across the District;
- The application period for elementary and secondary student transfers will be open from 30 January to 10 February 2023.

## 7. Briefing from the Director

Director Giroux reported that:

- An sharing session was planned for 19 January 2023 at Bell High School to gain input from the community regarding the Board's Strategic Plan, and that a virtual session is scheduled for 2 February 2023;
- A speaker series event on supporting child mental health and well-being is scheduled for 23 January 2023;
- A transition planning Question and Answer session for parents and caregivers of individuals with developmental disabilities is scheduled for 8 February 2023;
- An introductory webinar for parents on gender identity and expression is scheduled for 13 February 2023;
- A professional activity (PA) day is scheduled for 20 January 2023 for assessment and report card writing; and
- The OCDSB had arranged training with Bernie Farber, Chair of The Canadian Anti-Hate Network and past Canadian Jewish Congress past leader, and Len Rudner, advisory committee member to the Canadian Anti-Hate Network and past Canadian Jewish Congress leader, on the 20 and 30 January 2023. The focus was professional learning and development seminars focused on identifying and addressing antisemitism for school and system leaders.

In response to a query regarding the rescheduling of a strategic planning session at Ottawa Technical Secondary School (OTSS), Director Giroux advised that the session would be scheduled after other sites have completed their sessions.

## 8. Matters for Action:

### 8.1 Report 23-002, New Riverside South Secondary School - Approval of Study Consultation Plan and Timeline (R. Gerrior)

Your Committee had before it Report 23-002, seeking approval of a consultation process and timeline to establish the opening grade structure,

program offering and attendance boundary for a new secondary school located in the Riverside South community in Gloucester.

During a discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided:

- Funding was received for construction of the proposed Riverside South High School (HS) in 2020;
- There are approximately 1560 students, in grades 7 through 12, residing in Riverside South HS;
- The construction schedule is being adjusted as more work is required in respect to grade structure and school boundaries;
- Schools that would be impacted have already been notified;
- Consultation will be conducted both virtually and in-person;
- There will be opportunity to obtain input from the Indigenous community;
- Transportation is being explored with urban transit and yellow busing; and
- Flexibility exists to further explore impact on students and equity issues.

**Moved by** Jennifer Jennekens

- A. **THAT the timeline and consultation plan attached as Appendix B and C to Report 23-022, be approved in order to consult with local school communities and the public (attached as Appendix A and B); and**
- B. **THAT the Board affirm that a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) under Board Policy P.118.PLG is not required for this study.**

**Carried**

## 8.2 Report 23-007, Purchase of New Portable Classrooms (R. Gerrior)

Your Committee had before it Report 23-007, seeking approval to purchase ten new modular portable classrooms in order to provide the District with sufficient flexibility to accommodate student enrolment.

During a discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided,

- Approximately 60% of portables are over 25 years in age but 80% of that number have been renewed;
- No current studies regarding air quality are available; however, newly constructed portables adhere to building codes and mechanical air exchange units have been installed on all portables;
- The use of portables is intended to be temporary, consideration is given to building and fire codes with respect to environmental impact;
- Lifespan of portables is undetermined due to constant maintenance and refurbishing of aged units;
- A formal program is in place to renovate and update, work orders are completed as needed, renovations go above and beyond formal requirements;
- Current renewal funds are being used to rebuild surplus and replace units that have been destroyed; and
- Some units may need to be disposed of.

**Moved by** Donna Blackburn

**THAT the purchase of ten new modular portable classrooms, at a budgeted total cost of \$2,020,000.00 (excluding HST), be approved and funded from reserves, subject to Ministry approval.**

**Carried**

### 8.3 Notice of Motion, Re: Jewish Equity Coach, Trustee Kaplan-Myrth

Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

WHEREAS the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board's Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023, introduced in October 2020, sets direction in identifying and addressing systemic barriers that impact equitable access, opportunity and outcomes for underserved students and staff;

WHEREAS students and staff in Ottawa-Carleton District School Board schools, and in the community, are experiencing a persistent rise in antisemitic attitudes, discourse and behavior; and

WHEREAS Jewish students and families have shared their traumatic experiences and have appealed to the Board seeking stronger support in protecting and promoting Jewish student well-being;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the Board approve the hiring of a 1.0 FTE Jewish Equity Coach, with budget approval of approximately \$100,000 per annum, commensurate with other Equity Coach salaries.

During a discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided:

- Trustees expressed concern that antisemitism is on the rise and may be overlooked or insufficiently addressed in schools;
- Concerns were raised about the level of resources currently available to address antisemitism, and the need for more transparency and accountability in dealing with this issue;
- It was suggested that the lived experiences of Jewish students at school indicate the need for specialized/focused resources to address antisemitism and hate in a manner that is similar or comparable to the focused resources that have been made available to other identity based groups;
- A Jewish Equity Coach could assist in education, student support, and the management of incident reports;
- The allocation of resources with respect to the proposed position needs to be considered;
- A Jewish Equity Coach could expand the capacity to address antisemitism and anti-hate issues;
- The Jewish Equity Coach position should be a part of the equity team and work in collaboration with other staff on matters related to equity;

\*\*\* Vice-Chair Bell called the meeting into recess at 8:57 p.m. \*\*\*

\*\*\* Vice-Chair Bell called the meeting back to order at 9:08 p.m. \*\*\*

- If approved, additional work will be required by staff to develop the job description and areas of focus for the position; and
- While an instructional component will be important to the role, there is no requirement that the candidate be a certified educator.

An amendment moved by Trustee Scott,

THAT the recommendation reads as follows: "THAT the Board approve the creation of a 1.0 FTE position to support Jewish students experiencing antisemitism and to develop the OCDSB's capacity to combat antisemitism, with budget approval of approximately \$100,000 per annum commensurate with current Equity Coach salaries."

Trustees expressed concern that the amendment removes the identification criteria, focuses only on students, and does not require lived experience as a requirement for the position.

Staff indicated that, under the *Human Rights Code*, a pathway exists to require the candidate to be Jewish as it is a *bona fide* occupational qualification.

A concern was raised that locking in a specific title could create an expectation that may be unachievable.

Moved by Trustee Scott,

That the Board approve the creation of a 1.0 FTE position to support Jewish students experiencing antisemitism and to develop the OCDSB's capacity to combat antisemitism, with budget approval of approximately \$100,000 per annum commensurate with current Equity Coach salaries.

Defeated

It was clarified that 1.0 FTE indicates that the role would be filled by one individual.

**Moved by** Nili Kaplan-Myrth

**THAT the Board approve the hiring of a 1.0 FTE Jewish Equity Coach, with budget approval of approximately \$100,000 per annum, commensurate with other Equity Coach salaries.**

**Carried**

a. Supplemental Information

a. Memo 23-004, Resource Supports to Address Antisemitism and Hate

Your Committee had before it Memo 23-004. The memo was provided for information.

9. Reports from Statutory and Other Committees

9.1 Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE), 27 October 2022

**Moved by Trustee Presley,**

**THAT the 27 October 2022, Advisory Committee on Equity minutes be received.**

**Carried**

9.2 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 9 November 2022



**Moved by Trustee Scott,**

**THAT the 9 November 2022, Special Education Advisory Committee minutes be received.**

**Carried**

9.3 Indigenous Education Council (IEC), 17 November 2022

**Moved by Trustee Nash,**

**THAT the 17 November 2022, Indigenous Education Council minutes be received.**

**Carried**

9.4 Audit Committee, 28 November 2022

**Moved by Trustee Scott,**

**THAT the 28 November 2022, Audit Committee minutes be received.**

**Carried**

9.5 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 7 December 2022

**Moved by Trustee Aziz,**

**THAT the 7 December 2022, Special Education Advisory Committee minutes be received.**

**Carried**

10. Matters for Discussion:

10.1 Report 23-011 Environmental Scan Part 1

Your committee had before it Report 23-011 to discuss the environmental scan portion of the OCDSB Strategic Plan.

During a discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided:

- Reporting on the environmental scan and strategic plan will be ongoing throughout the remainder of the school year;
- The consultation process had begun, information about sessions has been shared and input has been received from Family and Community Engagement (FACE) to support the main sessions and the school-based focus groups;
- Four pathways are being utilized to gain input including one-on-one conversations and the use of the strategic planning toolkit with small groups and advisory committees;

- Consultations are planned in-person at Bell High School and virtually on 2 and 3 February 2023;
- A focused approach would take place at selected schools to capture the voice of parents, families and caregivers who may be less inclined to engage in the system wide consultations;
- The environmental scan was created to be a live document, allowing it to be interactive and to facilitate access to reports;
- Staff reviewed some of the key data in the report and responded to trustee questions.

\*\*\* The 10:30 vote did not receive the required 2/3 majority vote to continue\*\*\*

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 p.m.

At the time of adjournment, items 11. Information Items and 12. New Business were not dealt with.

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Keith Penny, Vice-Chair