



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

Tuesday, February 7, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Trustees Present: Justine Bell (electronic communication), Alysha Aziz, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Nili Kaplan-Myrth (electronic communication), Jennifer Jennekens, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, Lynn Scott, Tabarak Al-Delaimi (Student Trustee), Antong Hou (Student Trustee)

Staff Present: Michele Giroux (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director of Education), Randy Gerrior (Associate Director, Business Operations), Janice McCoy (Executive Officer), 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), 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), Stacey Kay (Manager, Learning Support Services), Kristin Schaub, Maya Kishida, Pamela LeMaistre (Manager, Human Resources), Sandra Owens (Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (Manager, Communications & Information Services), Michael Guilbault (Central Audio/Visual Technical Specialist), Marco Paladino (Training and Support Specialist), Mellissa Applewaihte (Board/Committee Coordinator)

Non-Voting Representatives Present: Sue Cowin SEAC), Seema Lamba (ACE), Lili Miller (IEC), Stephanie Kirkey (OSSFT D-25), Nathalie Sharma (EOC-ALT), Jean Fulton-Hale (OCSSAN)

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

Chair Presley called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Chair Presley 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 Nash,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were filed.

5. Delegations

5.1 Beisan Zubi, re Anti-Palestinian Racism

Ms. Zubi shared concerns about her lived experience as a Palestinian student within the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB). She provided examples of anti-Palestinian actions that had been previously directed towards her and expressed the view that an Arab Equity Coach would be a useful resource for OCDSB students to assist in understanding issues faced by Palestinian and Arab students.

Chair Presley called a recess to allow for the resolution of technical issues.

6. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Chair Presley noted the following points in her briefing:

- OCDSB families affected by the devastation caused by the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria can receive additional support by contacting their local school for assistance;
- The Ottawa Network for Education (ONFE) is looking for community volunteers over the age of 18; and
- The public sessions for the strategic planning consultation have concluded. Details on additional opportunities to provide input can be located on the OCDSB website.

7. Briefing from the Director

Director Giroux reported that:

- The Education Foundation of Ottawa is holding their annual Toonie Tuesday fundraiser. Students can bring \$2 or more to school until 21

February 2023. Online donations can be submitted from the Education Foundation website or through the School Cash Online account;

- Report cards for secondary students will be sent via email on 10 February 2023 and report cards for elementary students will be sent on 25 February 2023; and
- There will be a Professional Activity (PA) day for all elementary and secondary students on 17 February 2023.

8. Matters for Action:

8.1 Report 23-012, School Year Calendar: Key Dates (B. Reynolds)

Your Committee had before it Report 23-012, seeking approval of the 2023-2024 School Year Calendar dates.

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

- Associate Director Reynolds reported that OCDSB undertakes the process of compiling the school year calendar annually in line with the Education Act, Regulation 304. The internal process is completed after consultation with bargaining unit members and students. He noted that key calendar dates, such as winter and March break align with the other school boards in Ottawa;
- Assistant Director Reynolds noted that the draft 2023-2024 school year calendar has 7 Professional Development (PD) days scheduled, of which 3 are Ministry of Education (MOE) priority days. Professional Activity (PA) days have yet to be confirmed, but it is hoped that the Board will approve the calendar at the Board meeting on 28 February 2023. Following Board approval, the OCDSB will send the calendar to the MOE;
- In response to a query on whether the OCDSB can change dates set by the Ministry, Assistant Director Reynolds noted that the OCDSB modelled the draft calendar on the sample calendar provided by the MOE;
- In response to a query on the consideration of a four-day week, Associate Director Reynolds noted that the OCDSB had previously investigated the option, which had proved unpopular with bargaining units;
- In response to a query on whether the OCDSB had discussions with the Student Council on removing them from the policy, Associate Director Reynolds noted that the OCDSB could consult the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) at a future date; and

- Associate Director Reynolds noted that the OCDSB had considered dates of significance from a diverse range of backgrounds to ensure that these dates do not conflict with the proposed calendar dates.

Moved by Trustee Blackburn,

THAT the recommended school year calendar as outlined in Report 23-012 be submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval as the official 2023-2024 school year calendar for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board's elementary and secondary schools.

Carried

9. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

9.1 Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), 23 November 2022

Moved by Trustee Nash,

THAT the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Report dated 23 November 2022, be received.

Carried

9.2 Indigenous Education Council (IEC), 15 December 2022

Moved by Trustee Dickson,

THAT the Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Report dated 15 December 2022, be received.

Carried

9.3 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 11 January 2023

Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Report dated 11 January 2023, be received.

Carried

10. Matters for Discussion:

10.1 Report 23-008, Revisions to Policy P.029.SCO Field Trips, Excursions, Educational Tours, and Student Exchanges (B. Reynolds)

Your Committee had before it Report 23-008, Revisions to Policy P.029.SCO Field Trips, Excursions, Educational Tours, and Student Exchanges to discuss proposed updates to the policy.

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

- The proposed changes will promote safety, accessibility, student well-being and provide the best value for the student trip experience;
- The revised policy seeks to align with Human Resources equity initiatives and the equity work currently taking place throughout the District;
- The revisions aim to eliminate barriers to allow all students to participate and will require internal and public consultation. It is planned to bring the final revised policy to Committee of the Whole in March 2023;
- The policy goal is to keep trip or excursion costs as low as possible, which may not be achievable in the case of overseas trips. The OCDSB plans to make assistance available to those students who self-identify as in need and to facilitate group fundraising during the planning stage of trips. The new procedure will have guidelines for the communication and promotion of trips, and students will be invited to self-declare if they need financial or other assistance;
- In response to a query on how the OCDSB would communicate with school councils who were not consulted on the policy, Associate Director Reynolds noted that the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) could be consulted at a future date;
- The District will take into consideration issues of equity, cultural proficiency, and sense of belonging in decisions relating to field trips in order to avoid future trips that could be uncomfortable for some students;
- The Indigenous Education Team is collaborating with the OCDSB regarding field trips;
- It was noted that there should be a clear distinction between curricular and non-curricular field trips or excursions; and
- The OCDSB has worked with the Ottawa-Carleton Network for Education (OCENET), which promotes different experiences and access funding for some trips. The District is hoping to identify approved vendors who can offer more diverse opportunities.

10.2 Report 23-010, Specialized Program Class Referral Information 2022-2023 (P. Symmonds)

Your Committee had before it Report 23-010, Specialized Program Class (SPC) referral and placement process for the 2022-2023 school year to inform planning and decision making regarding supports and services for students with complex special needs.

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

- Special education is delivered in different ways across the province. The OCDSB offers several fully contained Specialized Program classes (SPCs) which were believed to provide the best model at the time of implementation when a smaller number of students required placements;
- Looking at SPCs through the lens of human rights, equity and inclusion, consideration must be given to whether and how SPCs might create systemic barriers for some groups of students;
- There is an increased need for more ASD classes at the secondary level, which raises ongoing questions about the sustainability of the current delivery model for special education. The OCDSB is utilizing itinerant teachers to support special education delivery;
- In response to a query on available data of students in specialized programs, staff explained some of the identity based data collection work underway and the need to balance in-depth analysis of existing delivery models against opportunities and need for the principles of inclusive design in special education programming; and
- Special education funding is an ongoing concern and trustees may consider opportunities for advocating for this at the upcoming meeting of the Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA).

Following a break at 9:49 p.m. the meeting was called to order at 10:00 p.m.

10.3 Report 23-016, Strategic Planning Presentation: Environmental Scan Part 2

Your Committee had before it Report 23-016 to discuss Part 2 of the environmental scan portion of the OCDSB Strategic Plan.

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

- Consultation on the strategic plan is ongoing with 130 planned one-to-one conversations, group sessions with community partners, advisory committees, District and virtual sessions. 23 summary reflections have been returned as a result of the one-to-one conversations and submissions that have been received from advisory committee, educator, and student group sessions;
- A virtual public consultation session with approximately 50 participants was held on 2 February 2023, and two separate virtual staff sessions were held on 2 and 3 February 2023 with a

combined total of 50 participants. Planning is underway for school-based sessions in 6 schools;

- Data collection for the environmental scan is intended to create a profile for the OCDSB and its students. Data gathered will be used to create a staff profile by the examination of feedback received on demographic information, staff engagement, staff well-being and staffing levels and vacancies;
- Significant qualitative feedback was collected from multiple staff engagement exchanges during the pandemic, which the OCDSB used to implement changes. The OCDSB has used data from an employee engagement survey that took place in 2021 to provide direction for ongoing work;
- Program and Learning (P&L) use a collaborative table model that provides regular engagement opportunities, and the OCDSB regularly connects with managers and supervisors;
- The OCDSB regularly meets with federation partners and works closely with the Labour Relations Team;
- In response to a query on the feedback received from racialized youth and staff, it was noted that the percentage shown in the information provided represented a direct comparison to the overall feedback figure received to date;
- In response to a query on what the OCDSB is using as a current active strategy or mechanism to address equity, diversity and inclusivity in the Board, including disability, Director Giroux noted that the Board has passed a policy on equitable hiring and recruitment to build a diverse workforce that is representative of OCDSB students, and that the District is committed to ongoing work on the policy;
- In response to a query on how the District approaches staff safety situations other than violent encounters, it was noted that the District has a committee that engages in healthy workplace conversations with representatives from partner federations and staff. The committee uses the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards for psychologically safe workspaces to guide discussions on supports and services; and
- It was noted that a significant factor affecting the educational assistant (EA) staffing issues faced by the OCDSB is the competition from other school boards in Ottawa, but that the provision of professional development opportunities may contribute to staff retention. It was also noted that school boards are experiencing similar issues throughout the province.

The 10:30 vote failed to receive the required 2/3 majority to continue

11. Information Items:

11.1 Report from OPSBA (if required)

There was no report from the OPSBA representatives.

11.2 OSTA Update (if required)

There was no OSTA update.

12. New Business - Information and Inquiries

There was no new business.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Amanda Presley, Acting Vice-Chair