

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
BOARD
Report No. 23-051**

**13 June 2023
26 June 2023**

REPORT ON THE 2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

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PURPOSE:

1. To present the 2023-2027 strategic plan for discussion and approval.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. The 2023-2027 strategic plan follows the implementation of the 2019-2023 strategic plan and leverages what we learned over the past four years as we worked to build a Culture of Innovation, a Culture of Caring, and a Culture of Social Responsibility. This plan has served us well and guided us through the past four years with clarity of direction and purpose. Driven by the values, priorities, and lessons learned through implementation of our current strategic plan, we have identified areas of focus for the new strategic plan.

CONTEXT:

3. The strategic plan guides key work and decision-making for the District. The development of a new strategic plan for 2023-2027 has been a large component of our work this year. The strategic planning process included a comprehensive [environmental scan](#), fulsome [consultation](#), and collaborative discussions among the Board of Trustees and senior team. This process led to the formulation of a new strategic plan (Appendix A), focused on Learning, Well-Being, and Social Responsibility.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. **Building a Plan Based on Community Input**
Consultation on the strategic plan focused on stories and feedback from students, staff, families, and the community. We gathered these stories through one-to-one conversations, small group conversations, large group meetings, electronic feedback, and school-based consultations. We conducted extensive analysis, from which six key themes emerged: Learning; Well-Being and

Belonging; Teaching; School and Classroom Environment; Curriculum and Programs; and Board and Administration. For detail on each of these themes, see the consultation summary [report](#).

Feedback from the consultation was situated in the broader context of the planning process, including the data presented in the environmental scan, other OCDSB reports, and evidence-based practices in the field of education. This included conversations with subject-matter experts, staff who assisted with facilitating the school-based consultations, and insights from Advisory Committees.

5. **Drafting the Strategic Plan**

The Board of Trustees and the senior team prioritized reviewing the consultation feedback to understand and contextualize community insights during multiple planning sessions. Through this work, the strength of the current strategic plan became evident. There was recognition of the value of the focused priorities and a plan that is simple, impactful, and measurable. There was also recognition of the opportunity for the plan to evolve, with a focus on learning and clear articulation of our core values.

This feedback informed the [draft strategic plan](#), which was shared on 9 May 2023. The draft was then shared with the community to solicit feedback during a public meeting; through student, staff, and caregiver emails; and through Advisory Committee toolkits. This led to further refinement of the content and terminology to ensure the plan was clear, accessible, and reflective of the needs of the community.

6. The key areas of focus identified are: *Learning; Well-Being; and Social Responsibility*. These three pillars reflect the requests we heard to put learning at the forefront of the strategic plan; to support student and staff wellness, especially as we address needs that emerged during the pandemic; and to acknowledge our collective responsibilities to society and the environment. A focus on equity and inclusion is embedded throughout the plan, and captured within each area of focus. Within each area, careful consideration was given to focusing on a few desired outcomes to move the District forward.

Area of Focus	Desired Outcomes
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved student literacy• Improved student achievement in mathematics• Improved program quality and accessibility for all students
Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved student mental health supports and resources• Enhanced cultural, emotional, and physical safety for all students and staff• Improved employee well-being and engagement• Improved educator-student relationships built on

	empathy, understanding, and respect for differences
Social Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued progress toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples • Strengthened student voice and leadership through fair and ethical decision-making • Improved environmental sustainability

7. **Mission and Values**

Discussions about the OCDSB's long-term vision, purpose, and core activities were central to strategic plan development. This included consideration of our purpose as defined in the Education Act and what we heard from the community. The draft mission statement, as shared on 9 May 2023, focused on equitable opportunities for students, to realize their potential and develop into thoughtful, innovative, and knowledgeable community members who contribute to their society. Through consultation on the draft, we heard appreciation from students for the new mission statement based on the specificity of the goals and reflection of our shifting priorities. We heard from Advisory Committees that there was an opportunity to further refine the mission to lead with learning and revise the language. As such the proposed mission is: *To build a learning community that provides students with equitable opportunities to reach their potential and develop into respectful, creative, and knowledgeable community members who contribute to society.*

The development of the strategic plan was also guided by in-depth conversations about the OCDSB's values. This involved harnessing the collective insights from the consultation, as well as guidance and experience from system leaders. Consultation on the draft values helped us to be mindful in the language used, moving away from educational jargon and working to make the values accessible to all. The following values have been identified for the 2023-2027 strategic plan:

- Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility;
- Community Building;
- Responsible Resource Use; and
- Leadership Development.

8. **Key Work and Measurement of Progress**

Through planning sessions, key work and success criteria were explored and reflected upon to identify what we need to do to be successful, how we will measure progress, and how we will see impact. An overview is presented on page 2 of Appendix A. An important part of this work will be the development of more detailed operational action plans which outline the implementation strategy and timelines. In the coming months, staff will be working on the creation of action plan templates to bring some consistency in reporting tools and to support the Board's capacity to effectively monitor progress.

Some action plans will be tied to Ministry directives. For example, the action plans for literacy and for math improvement will be guided by the much awaited

new Ministry guidelines. It is anticipated that the Ministry will be establishing required Key Performance Indicators, which school districts must use to report on progress.

To support the senior team and the Board of Trustees in the ongoing measurement and monitoring of the strategic plan, and in particular in using data to inform target setting, there will be professional learning opportunities planned for the fall. The District has been collaborating with a data equity research organization to inform our data equity framework. The [We All Count: Project for Equity in Data Science](#) will help develop the capacity of the Board and senior team to better understand and interpret data, including the complexity of intersectionality when determining disparity and disproportionality. This learning will be valuable as we measure progress and report to the Board on a regular basis.

9. Alignment of Work

As we adopt a new strategic plan, the implementation strategy must support the Board's legislative and fiduciary responsibilities, including approving the strategic plan; monitoring its implementation; allocating resources to support key initiatives; advocating for legislative, policy, and resource change; and making key decisions on policies and program models. The incoming Director will be responsible for guiding the staff work, including pedagogy; research; identification of best practices; design of models and frameworks; recommendations to the Board; identification of resources; operationalization of the work; and reporting on progress.

Looking towards year one of implementation and the opportunities for the Board and staff to engage in strategic thinking, Table 1 provides a framework for year one action plans. These action plans will be shaped and defined under the guidance of a new Director of Education, and will provide opportunities for discussion with the Board.

Table 1.

Preliminary Plans for Reporting to the Board			
	September - December	January - March	April - June
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of Strategic Plan Rollout • Math Improvement Plan • Literacy Action Plan • Approval of Program Review Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal of Indigenous, Human Rights, and Equity Roadmap • Employee Engagement and Leadership Strategy • School Safety Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Leadership Plan • Greening Action Plan • Mental Health Strategy

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

10. The development of the strategic plan has been undertaken with existing departmental resources and funds allocated for strategic planning. The implementation of the plan will be a District-wide priority, with the rollout of the plan and the execution of action plans for key areas funded through respective portfolios.
11. There is targeted Ministry funding to support the implementation of a number of the key initiatives in the new plan. For example key priorities such as Indigenous Education, math and literacy improvement, and mental health have targeted funding for learning materials and/or staffing. The 2023-2024 budget includes a number of investments to support key work in the area of employee well-being, safety, and greening.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

12. Consultation with the community has been integral to the development and design of the strategic plan. During the consultation, we heard a great deal about the continued relevance of the Exit Outcomes. The use of colour in the strategic plan allows for the incorporation of the Exit Outcomes branding and highlights the three identified areas of focus: Learning, Well-Being, and Social Responsibility. The three areas of focus are presented in circles, with intentional overlap to show their interconnectedness. The colours for each are also used around the values to demonstrate the values being embedded in each area. The icons used were carefully chosen: the Learning icon contains books to represent knowledge and education, along with a quill pen to represent creativity; the Well-Being icon contains a heart with design elements to represent care, balance, and connection; and the Social Responsibility icon contains multi-coloured hands to represent unity, diversity, and the collective effort toward social change. The imagery used in the design will be consistent across all strategic plan materials as we promote and implement the new plan.
13. Once approved by the Board, the final strategic plan will be shared on the 2023-2027 strategic plan [webpage](#), alongside a summary of how the plan was developed. It will be promoted on social media channels and communicated via student, parent and caregiver, and staff email updates. Tactically speaking, the strategic plan branding will be applied to templates across the District, including reports, presentations, banners, etc.
14. The most critical roll-out strategy of the new plan is with staff. Our experience with the last strategic plan affirmed that employee engagement with the plan is essential to successful implementation. Considerable work has been done to create a plan informed by employee feedback. The next step is to work with principals, managers, employee resource groups, and others to create awareness. This includes collaboration with principals to determine resources and tools that will support them in building awareness in their schools (e.g.,

posters, brochures, videos, Frequently Asked Questions, etc.). The staff portal will be an important tool for sharing resources with staff to support them in integrating the strategic priorities into their practice.

15. There will be ongoing communication of the strategic plan and the progress being made through its four-year lifespan. This will be achieved through annual measurement reports on the strategic plan, as well as incorporation and integration of the strategic priorities in regular reporting structures. The purpose of this reporting is to ensure transparency and accountability, and to inform resource allocation and annual action planning as we make progress toward our goals.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Strategic Plan 2023-2027, attached as Appendix A of Report 23-051, be approved.

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