

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

**Tuesday, June 13, 2023, 6:00 p.m.**

**Board Room**

**Administration Building**

**133 Greenbank Road**

**Ottawa, Ontario**

- Trustees Present: Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Jennifer Jennekens, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, Lynn Scott, Tabarak Al-Delaimi (electronic communication), 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, Corporate Services), 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), Reg Lavergne (Superintendent of Instruction), Brent Smith (Superintendent of Program and Learning – K-12), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel, Superintendent of Labour Relations, Risk Management and Privacy), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Andrea Rahim (Strategic Business Analyst), Kate Stoudt (Principal, Learning Support Services), Stacey Kay (General Manager, Learning Support Services), Sandra Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (General Manager, Communications & Information Services), Nicole Guthrie (General Manager of Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Content Creator, Digital Multimedia Technician), Mellissa Applewaithe (Board/Committee Coordinator)
- Non-Voting Representatives Present: Seema Lamba (ACE), Sue Cowin (SEAC), Jo-Joe Van Hooser (IEC), Suzanne Lyon (PIC), Melodie Gondek (OSSTF), Rebecca Zuckerbrodt (EFTO), Pat Dixon (OCEOTA), Stephanie Kirkey (OSSTF), Andrew Nordman (OCEOC), Thomas Holloway (OCASC), Steve Spidell (OCSSAN)

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

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

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. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were filed.

4. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**Carried**

5. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Chair Lyra Evans reported the following:

- The Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) is offering a ten week mental health promotion program from 11 July 2023 to 10 August 2023; and
- The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) is partnering with the National Arts Council (NAC) to offer a seven-week writing and performance summer workshop for Indigenous and Black youth from Grades 6 to 9.

6. Briefing from the Director

Director Giroux reported the following:

- More than 8,700 parents and caregivers, and 2,100 school-based staff completed the 2023 OCDSB school climate survey for parents, caregivers, and educators about engagement, environment, safety, and well-being. The information collected will be used to identify areas of strength and need in individual schools and inform broader efforts at the District level; and
- The first Cappies Gala since 2019 was held on 11 June 2023 to celebrate student success in art and drama. The Cappies program allows students to participate in all aspects of stage production: acting and music, technical production, communications and marketing, and producing critical reviews.

7. Delegations

7.1 Andrea Chandler, re Meetings with the Ottawa Police Service

Andrea Chandler, parent of two OCDSB students, expressed her understanding that the Board of Trustees had previously debated and resolved a motion regarding police in schools. She noted that individuals should not utilize social media to express their views on decisions made by elected Board members.

7.2 Robin Browne, re Meetings with the Ottawa Police Service

Robin Browne noted that the 613-819 Black Hub opposes Trustee Blackburn's motion to engage in discussions with Ottawa Police Services (OPS). Mr. Browne expressed his opinion that a 2022 OPS report on the use of force stating that force was used against Black people 4.8 times more than expected in 2020, and 4.3 times more than expected in 2021, Mr. Browne expressed the view that there is no evidence to prove that re-establishing the School Resource Officer (SRO) program will result in improved relationships between students and police.

7.3 Wenser Estime, re Meetings with the Ottawa Police Service

Speaking in support of Trustee Blackburn's motion, Wenser Estime expressed the opinion that schools should reflect the diversity of its community and allow community members on school premises to better serve and protect the health and safety of students and staff. He noted that a recent OCDSB school climate survey reported that almost 25% of parents reported that their child feels unsafe at school, 40% reported their child has experienced bullying, and approximately 70% of staff reported that bullying was brought to their attention.

7.4 Mae Mason, re Meetings with the Ottawa Police Service

Speaking on behalf of the Asilu Collective, Mae Mason expressed the view that, in 2021, the Asilu Collective demonstrated that the removal of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program operated by the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) would support racialized students and other marginalized groups who were suffering under the program. Mae Mason asked whether a further review was completed to justify consideration of a new motion with respect to police in schools and encouraged the Board to review the 2021 OCDSB report regarding the removal of the SRO program.

7.5 Lesley Ford, re National Indigenous Peoples Day

Speaking as a parent, community member and OCDSB teacher, Lesley Ford drew attention to National Indigenous Peoples Day on 21 June 2023 which is also designated as an examination day for secondary school students on the 2022-2023 secondary school year calendar. Ms. Ford noted that students are not required to self-identify as Indigenous and some schools communicated to staff and families that Indigenous students may be absent on that day.

In response to a query from Suzanne Lyon, Director Giroux advised that the 2023-2024 school year calendar has been approved by the Ministry of Education.

In response to a query from Seema Lamba, Ms. Ford noted that she was unaware of directions provided to other schools with respect to activities and student absences on National Indigenous Peoples Day. Director Giroux advised that information about National Indigenous Peoples Day has been provided in employee and parent newsletters.

8. Matters for Action:

8.1 Report 23-045, Special Education Plan 2022-2023 (P. Symmonds)

Your Committee had before it Report 23-045 seeking approval of the Special Education Plan 2022-2023. Superintendent Symmonds and System Principal Kate Stoudt provided an overview of the Plan, including its purpose, key updates, consultation, and requirement to report to the Ministry of Education on the District's special education programs and responsibilities.

Trustee Scott noted an error in Part 3 of the Table of Contents: the list of Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) members should be for 2022-2023 rather than 2019-2020.

Moved by Trustee Scott,

- A. THAT the 2022-2023 Special Education Plan, attached as Appendix A of Report 23-045, be approved; and
- B. THAT the 2022-2023 Special Education Report, attached as Appendix B of Report 23-045, be approved).

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

- It was requested that the Special Education Plan for 2023-2024 include a requirement for funding for additional educational assistants (EAs);
- Trustee Lyra Evans queried whether it would be desirable for the District to eliminate all specialized classes in favour of fully integrating students with special needs in regular classrooms with support and monitoring. Staff acknowledge the need for more inclusive programming and advised that the program review process commencing in 2023-2024 will allow for an in-depth investigation of special education programs through literature reviews, focus groups, and pathway and outcome analyses to help determine the most appropriate delivery model; and

- SEAC reviewed various components of the Special Education Plan over the 2022-2023 school year. Their recommendations for improvement included the introduction of a flowchart, and clarification and/or explanation of some terms or processes.

**Moved by Trustee Scott,**

- A. THAT the 2022-2023 Special Education Plan, attached as Appendix A of Report 23-045, be approved (Attached as Appendix A); and**
- B. THAT the 2022-2023 Special Education Report, attached as Appendix B of Report 23-045, be approved (Attached as Appendix B).**

**Carried**

## 8.2 Report 23-051, 2023-2027 Strategic Plan (A. Rahim)

Your Committee had before it Report 23-051, seeking approval of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. The strategic plan guides key work and decision-making for the District, and the process of developing the plan included an environmental scan, consultation, and collaborative discussions among trustees and senior staff.

Moved by Trustee Aziz,

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

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

- The Board and senior staff will engage in professional development (PD) in the fall of 2023 to build capacity to understand and interpret data to measure progress;
- Staff will report to the public through regular in-depth progress reports to the Board on a particular strategic priority (i.e., student achievement) or pillar (i.e., learning or well-being or social responsibility), as well as the Director's annual report to the community;
- Trustee Scott indicated that there has been some confusion in the community about whether the mission and values statements are the "strategic plan". She suggested that the three pillars on page two that outline what success looks like, work to be done, how to measure progress, and the impact, be labelled as the the strategic plan and be on the first page;

- A variety of documents and webpages will be developed to communicate the strategic plan to students, parents and caregivers, staff, and the public;
- Trustee Lyra Evans expressed the opinion that the plan should include specific, ambitious numerical targets against which to measure progress;
- Staff advised that in-depth reports (i.e., mathematics and literacy improvement plans, and the program review framework) will include targets for students;
- It is anticipated that the Ministry of Education will provide specific directives on annual reporting requirements as part of the implementation of *Bill 98 Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act 2023*;
- Following approval of the strategic plan, the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023 will be renewed to provide an overview of equity priorities and work to be done; and
- The new Director of Education will be fully briefed on the consultation process and collaboration that was undertaken by trustees and staff in developing the strategic plan.

**Moved by Trustee Aziz,**

**THAT the Strategic Plan 2023-2027, attached as Appendix A of Report 23-051, be approved (Attached as Appendix C).**

**Carried**

**8.3 Report 23-049, Naming of the New Elementary School in Half Moon Bay (S. Lehman)**

Your Committee had before it Report 23-049, seeking approval of the name of a new elementary school in Half Moon Bay. Superintendent Lehman advised that the school naming committee consulted with students, parents/guardians, staff, Half Moon Bay community members, the Indigenous Education Council, and an Indigenous Elder.

**Moved by Trustee Blackburn,**

**THAT the new Half Moon Bay elementary school located in Ottawa at 989 Kilbirnie in Barrhaven, be named Wazoson Public School, effective September 2023.**

**Carried**

**8.4 Notice of Motion, Re: Discussions with Ottawa Police Services, Trustee Blackburn**

Moved by Trustee Blackburn,

WHEREAS the health and safety of our students and staff is a top priority without which student achievement and well-being cannot be realized; and

WHEREAS school safety can be enhanced by a partnership with the police service which supports the safety and security of school communities and proactively assists students who may benefit from positive police involvement;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the Director of Education engage in discussions with the Ottawa Police Service to establish standards of practice that allow for police support to schools respecting the safety and security of students and staff.

On a point of order, Trustee Presley requested that the motion be ruled out of order for the following reasons:

- It is similar to a motion moved by Trustee Blackburn at the Committee of the Whole meeting of 10 May 2022 which was temporarily disposed of by way of indefinite postponement;
- Increasing police support to schools would cause harm to students which is in contravention of the Board's strategic plan, governance and safe schools policies, and the Board's By-laws and Standing Rules with respect to student safety and well-being;
- It is not required as Part D of the Board-approved motion of 24 June 2021, regarding the removal of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program, calls upon the District to join with other school districts, the City of Ottawa, Ottawa Police Services (OPS) and other groups "...to work collaboratively through a process that is guided by a human rights based approach on improving services and supports for youth in crisis"; and
- The community has not been consulted on this motion.

Director Giroux advised that work on implementation of Part D of the 24 June 2021 motion is ongoing.

Chair Bell ruled that the motion is out of order for the following reasons:

- It conflicts with the Board's By-Laws and Standing Rules;
- It has been previously postponed indefinitely;
- Part D of the motion regarding removal of the SRO program has not yet been completed; and
- It would cause harm to the community.

Trustee Blackburn challenged the ruling of the Chair and stated that it is not her intent to cause harm to students and staff but rather to stop harm.

Trustee Bell called for a vote to uphold the ruling of the chair. It was noted that the Chair does not vote as they are deemed to be in favour of the motion.

Student Trustees Hou and Al-Delaimi requested a non-binding recorded vote.

Following a non-binding recorded vote, the ruling of the chair was upheld on the following vote:

For: Trustees Aziz, Bell, Lyra Evans, Kaplan-Myrth, Milburn, Presley (6)

Student Trustees Al-Delaimi, Hou (2)

Against: Trustees Blackburn, Dixon, Jennekens, Lee, Scott (5)

Abstain: Trustee Nash (1)

Trustee Blackburn requested a recorded vote.

Following a binding recorded vote, the ruling of the chair was upheld on the following vote:

For: Trustees Aziz, Bell, Lyra Evans, Kaplan-Myrth, Milburn, Presley (6)

Against: Trustees Blackburn, Dixon, Jennekens, Lee, Scott (5)

Abstain: Trustee Nash

8.5 Notice of Motion, Re: Ottawa Carleton Educational Space Simulation, Trustee Lyra Evans

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

WHEREAS the Ottawa Carleton Educational Space Simulation has provided more than 30 years of students with space enthusiasm and science knowledge;

WHEREAS the current space took more than 10 years to build, and the organization does not have the resources to rebuild the necessary built environment;

WHEREAS the current space has operational health and safety issues which need to be addressed;

WHEREAS the current space is slated for demolition to make room for an expansion to a different Board program, despite the Board having alternate space available in the same building;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:



THAT the Ottawa-Carleton Educational Space Simulation not be moved or the space demolished, allowing time for potential occupational health and safety concerns to be addressed.

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

- Trustee Lyra Evans noted that she is unaware of any similar space simulations operating in the Ottawa area;
- Director Giroux advised that this is an operational matter that does not require Board approval. She noted that there are many occupational health and safety hazards to be addressed, including combustible materials, wiring, smoke alarms, and asbestos, and the space simulation is an activity that is subject to regulatory obligations and liability concerns. She added that it is unclear who owns the equipment and who has responsibility for liability associated with the activities;
- The space has been used in the past by a student-run club at Lisgar Collegiate Institute to run one five-day mission per year;
- Several trustees expressed concern for about the health and safety issues that require attention, and the cost to address them; and
- If the space simulation is dismantled or demolished, it will be repurposed to expand the space currently used by Indigenous students;

Trustee Nash assumed the chair.

- Trustee Bell, noting that some of her constituents have used the space simulation and pursued careers in aerospace engineering, asked if there was any way to continue the activity and rebuild the space in a safe way. Staff advised that there is no room to house the space simulation at Lisgar Collegiate Institute, and if it were moved to a different location, it would need to be supervised and made available to all students;

Trustee Bell resumed the chair.

- Trustee Lyra Evans requested that a further assessment of the health and safety issues be undertaken before the space is demolished or moved. Staff advised that further assessment would involve redirecting staff to do the work at the expense of other projects. The Board does not normally deal with safety codes in schools, and the District is obliged to meet its legal obligations with respect to the health and safety of students and staff;
- On a point of order, Trustee Lee queried whether the motion was in order given that the space is currently in violation of fire safety

codes. Director Giroux advised that student safety is a District priority and the Committee could take this procedural approach or deal with the main motion. Trustee Lee withdrew his point of order; and

- Trustee Lyra Evans reiterated that the space simulation is a science program that carries a lower risk than sports such as football and rugby. She noted that the motion does not ignore the health and safety issues but rather calls a halt to the demolition or removal of the space simulation until the health and safety concerns have been addressed.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the Ottawa-Carleton Educational Space Simulation not be moved or the space demolished, allowing time for potential occupational health and safety concerns to be addressed.

Defeated

9. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

9.1 Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), 12 April 2023

**Moved by Trustee Nash,**

**THAT the report from the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), dated 12 April 2023, be received.**

**Carried**

9.2 Indigenous Education Council (IEC), 13 April 2023

**Moved by Trustee Scott,**

**THAT the report from the Indigenous Education Council (IEC), dated 13 April 2023, be received.**

**Carried**

9.3 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 17 April 2023

**Moved by Trustee Dickson,**

**THAT the report from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), dated 17 April 2023, be received.**

**Carried**

9.4 Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE), 27 April 2023

**Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,**

**THAT the report from the Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE), dated 27 April 2023, be received.**

**Carried**

9.5 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 3 May 2023

**Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,**

**THAT the report from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), dated 3 May 2023, be received.**

**Carried**

9.6 Audit Committee, 17 May 2023

**Moved by Trustee Millburn,**

**THAT the report from the Audit Committee, dated 17 May 2023, be received.**

**Carried**

10. Information Items:

10.1 Report from OPSBA (if required)

Trustee Scott advised that the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) held its annual general meeting (AGM) and the President and Vice-Presidents are continuing their multi-year terms. Susan Humphries from Renfrew County District School Board (RCDSB) was acclaimed as Eastern Regional Chair, and Karen McGregor from Limestone District School Board (LDSB) was acclaimed as Eastern Regional Vice-Chair. Trustee Scott also advised that she was elected as the Eastern Region Representative.

10.2 OSTA Update (if required)

There was no OSTA update.

11. New Business - Information and Inquiries

In response to a request from Trustee Bell about the roles and responsibilities of trustees regarding speaking about Board decisions, Director Giroux advised that Board members are responsible for upholding the decisions of the Board. The Chair is the official spokesperson for the Board. If individual trustees speak to the media, they must be clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the Board.

Trustee Kaplan-Myrth suggested that staff and trustees consider working together to write to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) to advocate that hate-based protests not be permitted on or near school property.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

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Justine Bell, Vice-Chair