



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

- Trustees Present: Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell (electronic communication), Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, Lynn Scott, Emma Hong (Student Trustee), Malaika Kamanzi (Student Trustee)
- Staff Present: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director of Education), Randy Gerior (Associate Director, Business Operations), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Paula Hall (Superintendent of People, Culture and Leadership), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Instruction), Marva Major (Superintendent of Instruction), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Karyn Carty Ostafichuk (General Manager, Planning/Transportation), Stacey Kay (General Manager, Learning Support Services), Pamela LeMaistre (General Manager, People Culture and Leadership), Sandy Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (General Manager, Communications & Information Services), Christina Saad (Human Rights Officer), Nicole Guthrie (General Manager of Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Central Audio/Visual Technical Specialist), Mark Keough (Planner), David Suriano (Planner), Susan Baker
- Non-Voting Representatives Present: Seema Lamba (ACE), Lili Miller (IEC), Melodie Gondek (OSSTF), Stephanie Kirkey (OSSTF - District 25), Jean Fulton-Hale and Rebecca Shields (OCSSAN), Jamieson Dyer (OCEOTA), Tom Holloway (OCASC)

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

Vice-Chair Milburn called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Vice-Chair Milburn 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 Nash,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

5. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Trustee Scott reported the following:

- Wazoson Public School students started the new year at their new school on 8 January 2024. A formal opening ceremony will take place in the spring of 2024. Last year, Shingwakons Public School and a new elementary school in Findlay Creek were opened, and a new high school in Stittsville will open later this year; and
- Kindergarten registration is now open for children turning four years old in 2024. Kindergarten Information Nights are being held in schools across the District.

6. Briefing from the Director

Director Buffone reported the following:

- All Indigenous students in grades 7-12 and parents/caregivers were encouraged to participate in the Indigenous Languages Survey. The information gathered will be used to gain a deeper understanding of what First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages are present in the District and the challenges students face in learning and using them. The survey closes on 31 January 2024;
- Secondary school course selection for students currently in Grade 8 opened on 15 January 2024. Students in Grades 9-12 can begin to select their courses on 4 February 2024. The deadline for submissions is 1 March 2024;
- Winter virtual night school registration opens on 11 January 2024; and
- The District's Night School program is open to students from all school boards as well as to adult learners. Students may upgrade courses or take courses that are not available in their home school, as well as for adult

learners working towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma or upgrading their courses.

In response to queries, the following points were noted:

- Snow removal services are provided by third-party providers and any complaints or concerns should be addressed to the school principal or chief custodian who will follow up with the vendor to rectify any issues; and
- Guidance documents were provided to administrators and educators on 7 November 2023 to assist with classroom discussions with respect to violent and disturbing images of war in the Middle East. Learning Support Services (LSS) also provides support to students and an employee assistance program is available to staff.

7. Delegations

There were no delegations.

8. Matters for Action:

8.1 Report 24-004, New Findlay Creek Elementary School Study (R. Gerrior)

Your Committee had before it Report 24-004, seeking approval of the opening grade structure, program offering, and attendance boundary for a new elementary school to be opened in the Findlay Creek neighborhood, as well as other associated changes.

Planner David Suriano introduced the report and noted that the recommendations were made in consultation with the working group, comprised of staff and school council members from Vimy Ridge Public School and Roberta Bondar Public School.

Planner Mark Keough reviewed the map of the proposed attendance boundary and noted that the school will offer English and Early French Immersion programs for students in grades JK-Grade 6.

Moved by Trustee Jennekens,

- A. THAT the opening grade structure, program offering and attendance boundary for the New Findlay Creek Elementary School be approved according to Appendix E to Report No. 24-004;
- B. THAT the revised attendance boundary for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 for Vimy Ridge Public School be approved according to Appendix F to Report No. 24-004, to be implemented upon the opening of the New Findlay Creek Elementary School;
- C. THAT the Grade 7 and 8 attendance boundary for Vimy Ridge Public School be approved as per Appendix G to Report No. 24-004;

- D. THAT all current Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5 students that have been directed to Robert Bateman Public School as a result of the interim measures outlined in Report No. 22-037 be redirected to their home school upon opening of the New Findlay Creek Elementary School; and
- E. THAT current Grade 7 students attending Roberta Bondar Public School, as a result of the interim measures outlined in Report No. 22-037, be given a one-time option to remain at Roberta Bondar Public School or attend Vimy Ridge Public School upon the opening of the New Findlay Creek Elementary School.

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

- A storm management ditch north of Conroy Road marks the northern boundary;
- Students are not given an option to select which school they wish to attend as this creates attendance instability for schools;
- The Boothfield community area is included in the Riverside South Secondary School and the new Findlay Creek Elementary School attendance areas; and
- The next growth area is anticipated to be in the southwest block of the attendance area.

Moved by Trustee Jennekens,

- A. **THAT the opening grade structure, program offering and attendance boundary for the New Findlay Creek Elementary School be approved according to Appendix E to Report No. 24-004 (Attached as Appendix A);**
- B. **THAT the revised attendance boundary for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 for Vimy Ridge Public School be approved according to Appendix F to Report No. 24-004, to be implemented upon the opening of the New Findlay Creek Elementary School (Attached as Appendix B);**
- C. **THAT the Grade 7 and 8 attendance boundary for Vimy Ridge Public School be approved as per Appendix G to Report No. 24-004 (Attached as Appendix C);**
- D. **THAT all current Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5 students that have been directed to Robert Bateman Public School as a result of the interim measures outlined in Report No. 22-037 be redirected to their home school upon opening of the New Findlay Creek Elementary School; and**

E. THAT current Grade 7 students attending Roberta Bondar Public School, as a result of the interim measures outlined in Report No. 22-037, be given a one-time option to remain at Roberta Bondar Public School or attend Vimy Ridge Public School upon the opening of the New Findlay Creek Elementary School.

Carried

9. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

9.1 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 1 November 2023

Moved by Trustee Presley,

THAT the report from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), dated 1 November 2023, be received.

Carried

9.2 Indigenous Education Council (IEC), 9 November 2023

Moved by Trustee Aziz,

THAT the report from the Indigenous Education Council (IEC), dated 9 November 2023, be received.

Carried

9.3 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 6 December 2023

Moved by Trustee Scott,

THAT the report from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), dated 6 December 2023, be received.

Carried

10. Matters for Discussion:

10.1 Report 24-008, Human Rights and Equity Annual Report (C. Tanner)

Your Committee had before it Report 24-008, providing the first report of the Office of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor (O-HREA). The report reflects on the progress made to date in advancing the organization's commitment to building and maintaining a culture of respect for human rights, as well as the principles of inclusion, diversion, equity, and accessibility.

Director Buffone advised that this report covers the period since March 2020 when Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner (HREA) was hired and the O-HREA was established. The Ministry of Education covers the salary for the HREA but does not fund other office staff or operating costs. The report outlines the contributions of the O-HREA to training and

professional development, outreach and awareness building, providing advice on human rights issues and concerns, investigations conducted, and a summary of system-level recommendations made to the Director. The O-HREA operates at “arm's length” to provide advice and is not responsible for implementing any of the recommendations. While the report is comprehensive, it does not reflect the full breadth of work undertaken across the District in support of human rights, as well as inclusivity, diversity, equity and accessibility.

HREA Tanner introduced Christina Saad, Human Rights Officer, and noted that Kim Young provides administrative support to the office.

HREA Tanner provided a presentation of the report and highlighted the following:

- The Human Rights Policy was approved in January 2022;
- A number of other policies and procedures were reviewed with a human rights perspective and updated, as required;
- Since 2020, 210 concerns were reported to the O-HREA and 54 investigations were undertaken;
- The investigations have become increasingly more complex; and
- The O-HREA has identified 17 human rights-related system issues and made recommendations to the Director to address the issues.

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

- Consideration was given to additional resource allocations that would be required to implement all of the recommendations;
- Some of the recommendations can be implemented within the District's existing processes;
- Subsequent annual reports will include status updates on previous recommendations as well as a summary of new recommendations;
- With respect to the recommendation to obtain informed consent of the student and parent prior to police involvement and the District's mandatory requirement to report all critical incidents to the police and the Ministry of Education, it was noted that obtaining consent would assist the student in understanding the requirement to involve the police;
- The District is looking at ways to rejuvenate and continue its partnership with the Ottawa Police Service (OPS);
- Elimination of a mandatory notice to a by-law officer and an educative response to vaping is recommended to address the issue

without imposing a fine of \$385, interaction with a by-law officer, and/or closing washrooms;

- Not all cases that were heard by the Human Rights Tribunal required a response or a defense;
- A procedure is under development to guide the resolution of human rights-based concerns (i.e., identification of human rights vs human resources concerns; processes for informal and formal investigations);
- The O-HREA plans to implement a comprehensive data tracking system; and
- Seema Lamba suggested that a satisfaction survey be conducted to determine if complainants were satisfied with the outcome of their concerns. She also requested that the report be presented for discussion at a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE).

Moved by Trustee Scott,

THAT the Committee of the Whole adjourn to immediately follow the 9:00 p.m. Special Board Meeting.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

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Chair Milburn called the meeting to order at 9:35 p.m.

The discussion continued, and in response to queries, the following information was provided;

- Human rights training was provided to trustees as part of their trustee orientation and at an Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) conference. Senior staff received internal training and some senior staff members attended training at Osgoode Hall. Additional training is planned this year;
- Lili Miller requested that the O-HREA conduct a review of graduation rates for Indigenous students. She also suggested that the District's website is difficult for people to navigate on a phone and that the O-HREA may not be easily accessible to Indigenous people;
- Schools are required to complete an online form whenever they have contact with the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) for mandatory and discretionary reporting, as well as when OPS has reached out to schools. Memo 23-045, dated 9 June 2023, to trustees (posted

on the District's website) provided information by category of the number of Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) school contacts with the OPS for the years 2021-2022 (265 contacts) and 2022-2023 (246 contacts). Additional information will be provided in the Spring in the safe schools annual report;

- The O-HREA observed that single track, dual track, and multi-track language programs in close proximity to each other contribute to the inequitable streaming of students due to their varying needs which are attributable to the programs being offered at each school;
- Integration of all students with special needs who are currently in specialized program classes, would contribute to their participation and inclusion, and the District's transparency and accountability. Inclusive design would allow all students to realize their full potential in a regular classroom;
- Student Trustees Hong and Kamanzi expressed concern about the District's ability to achieve full integration due to the highly specialized needs of some students and the ability to adequately staff all classrooms. Superintendent Symmonds noted that, while there are some situations where integration would be appropriate with adequate support, the research demonstrates that academic outcomes for students in specialized classes are the same or better as in the regular classroom;
- One of the goals of the O-HREA is to keep students in school as much as possible by addressing vaping and cannabis use in a considered and creative way, and teaching students to respect the rules so as to avoid the need to suspend or expel students;
- The Ontario Anti-racism Act requires school boards to report by race. While limiting data collection to specific demographic groups may inadvertently exclude other groups, data collection for specific groups helps to identify barriers that need to be addressed; and

Trustee Jennekens assumed the Chair.

- In response to concerns expressed for the limited staff resources in the O-HREA, Director Buffone noted that senior staff is examining the District's internal operational priorities in preparation of a balanced staff-recommended budget.

Trustee Milburn resumed the Chair.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the discussion of Report 24-008, Human Rights and Equity Annual Report, be continued at the Board meeting of 30 January 2024.

An amendment moved by Trustee Aziz,

THAT “27 February 2024” replace “30 January 2024”.

11. Adjournment

The 10:30 vote to continue the meeting did not receive a two-thirds majority and the meeting adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

At the time of adjournment, items 10.1, Report 24-008, Human Rights and Equity Annual Report, was incomplete, and agenda items 11. Information Items, 12. New Business were not dealt with.

Cathryne Milburn, Chair