



BOARD PUBLIC MINUTES

Tuesday, March 26, 2024, 7:00 pm
Board Room
Administration Building
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

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

Staff: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director of Education), Randy Gerrior (Associate Director, Business Operations), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), James Proulx (Executive Officer, Information Technology and Digital Transformation), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Paula Hall (Superintendent of People, Culture and Leadership), Reg Lavergne (Superintendent of Instruction), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Instruction), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel), Teri Adamthwaite (General Manager, Finance), Stacey Kay (General Manager of Learning Support Services), Sandy Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (General Manager of Communications & Information Services), Nicole Guthrie (General Manager, Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Content Creator, Digital Multimedia Technician), Kathy Mak (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order -- Chair of the Board

Chair Scott called the public meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Chair Scott acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Homelands and thanked the Algonquin Nations for their stewardship of these lands since time immemorial.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were filed.

4. Report from In Camera Session

Vice-Chair Milburn reported that the Board met in camera earlier this evening and reports and recommends as follows:

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT staff proceed as directed in Board in Camera with respect to a financial matter.

For (12): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

Moved by Jennifer Jennekens

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT the tentative settlement between the OCDSB and OSSTF-PSSU, which will form a collective agreement dated 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2026 be ratified.

For (12): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT the tentative settlement between the OCDSB and OSSTF OTBU which will form a collective agreement dated 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2026 be ratified.

For (12): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

Moved by Jennifer Jennekens

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT the tentative settlement between the OCDSB and OSSTF-SSP, which will form a collective agreement dated 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2026 be ratified.

For (12): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

Moved by Donna Blackburn

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT the tentative settlement between the OCDSB and OSSTF-TBU, which will form a collective agreement dated 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2026 be ratified.

For (12): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

5. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Trustee Trustee Kaplin-Myrth, seconded by Trustee Presley,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

6. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

During the briefing from Chair Scott, the following information was provided:

- The Ontario Government has released the 2024 provincial budget;
- The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) shared the recommendations for education funding in the pre-budget consultation process;
- The release of Grants for Student Needs (GSN) this spring will provide additional information about funding for school boards, assisting in the preparation of the annual operating budget; and

- Nominations for 2023-2024 Community Recognition Awards are now open and more information can be found on the District website.

7. Briefing from the Director

During the briefing from Director Buffone, the following information was provided:

- Director Buffone attended the Assunnah Muslim Association's (AMA) Annual Community Iftar on 20 March 2024 to connect with members of the community;
- Director Buffone accepted a Community Partnership Award from the AMA on behalf of the OCDSB; and
- 2024 summer language classes and camps registration is now open. The Learning Support Service (LSS) team will host a session on kindergarten success on 27 March 2024 and author and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) consultant Judy Endow will lead a session on 4 April 2024.

8. Delegations

8.1 Shannon Boschy, re Efficacy of DEI Policies

Shannon Boschy shared his views regarding the OCDSB's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policies. Shannon Boschy expressed the opinion that DEI creates a negative environment and reduces freedom of speech.

8.2 Chanel Pfahl, re Human Rights Policy

Chanel Pfahl expressed the opinion that elements of Policy P.147.GOV Human Rights are contradictory and suggested that the Board revise this policy to emphasize the importance of equality and not equity.

8.3 Marianne Graham, re Arabic-Speaking Equity Coach

Marianne Graham expressed the need for an Arabic-speaking Equity Coach to cultivate awareness and inclusivity within schools. She advocated the importance of equity coaches to address the critical needs of staff and students through a cultural, academic and social perspective.

8.4 Monalisa Ghadban, re Arabic-Speaking Equity Coach

Monalisa Ghadban advocated for additional awareness and conversations within schools to address racism. She suggested that Arabic-speaking equity coaches would be able to provide training and professional development for both administrators and educators while supporting students and families.

8.5 Jana Moughrabi, re Arabic-Speaking Coach

Jana Moughrabi expressed the importance of an Arabic-speaking coach as they are able to provide support to students through their understanding of Arabic culture while addressing racism within the schools to create an inclusive and safe environment for students.

8.6 Hala Dabboussi, re Arab-Speaking Equity Coach

Hala Dabboussi spoke about the need for a Muslim equity coach and Arabic-speaking equity coach to create awareness amongst staff and students through their understanding of the Arabic culture in order to foster an inclusive environment throughout schools.

8.7 Ghada Qadan, re Arabic-Speaking Equity Coach

Ghada Qadan stressed the importance of an Arabic-speaking Equity Coach to address anti-Muslim, Arab and anti-Palestinian racism within OCDSB schools. She expressed the view that the coaches will be able to understand cultural sensitivity and provide support to students and families while facilitating conversations in schools surrounding geopolitical issues.

8.8 Omer El-Beheisi, re Addressing Global Events in the Classroom

Omer El-Beheisi expressed the view that students and staff within the OCDSB are inhibited in expressing their Arab Palestinian identity.

8.9 Yasmen Abuzaid, re Arabic-Speaking Equity Coach

Yasmen Abuzaid voiced the need for a Muslim equity coach and an Arabic-speaking equity coach to raise awareness of racism and stereotypes so that students may feel confident in expressing their identity. She emphasizes the importance of facilitating conversations regarding global events within schools.

Director Buffone addressed the concerns raised by the delegates and noted the following:

- The OCDSB continues to practice culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy which continues to evolve over time and the District continues to work to accommodate religious and other needs of students;
- The aim is to diversify the curriculum so it is globally oriented and not euro-centric or other; and
- In the context of Human Rights code, the OCDSB must balance freedom of expression and identity, with consideration for the potential harm or hurt it may cause to others.

9. Confirmation of Board Minutes

9.1 27 February 2024

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Dickson,
THAT the Board Minutes, dated 27 February 2024, be confirmed.**

Carried

9.2 5 March 2024, Special Board

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Dickson,
THAT the Special Board Minutes, dated 5 March 2024, be confirmed.**

Carried

10. Business Arising from Board Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

11. Matters for Action

11.1 Receipt of Committee of the Whole Report

11.1.a 5 March 2024

Moved by Trustee Milburn , seconded by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the Committee of the Whole report, dated 5 March 2024, be received.

Carried

11.1.a.a Approval of Letter in Support of a Legislative Ban on Advertisements for Gambling

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

A. THAT the OCDSB assert that it supports a legislative ban on advertisements for gambling in Canada in all media;

B. THAT the Chair send a letter to local Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), and provincial and federal political leaders to advocate that legislation be enacted to ban advertising for gambling in all media.

For (9): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Lyra Evans, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Against (2): Donna Blackburn, and Donna Dickson

Carried (9 to 2)

11.1.a.b Approval of Letter in Support of Distribution of Products to Support Menstrual Equity Program

Moved by Alysha Aziz

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT the Chair write to the Minister of Education on behalf of the Board requesting that the Ministry ensure menstrual products are procured, distributed and accessible for all Ontario schools on an ongoing basis, free of additional charge(s) to individual boards.

For (11): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (11 to 0)

11.2 Receipt of Committee of the Whole Budget Report

11.2.a 19 March 2024

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Lee,

THAT the Committee of the Whole Budget report, dated 19 March 2024, be received.

It was noted that the Committee of the Whole (COW) Budget report dated 19 March 2024 requires Board approval. Following this approval, the trustee amendment relating to Report 24-018, Academic Staffing, will be made available on the OCDSB website.

Executive Officer Giroux clarified that a notation on the addendum to the COW 19 March 2024 report, reflects the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions approved in the amendment.

Superintendent Farrish noted that the OCDSB aims to collaborate with the community to address how students experience global events and urged trustees to consider the non-academic roles of

student coordinators as there are two Muslim coordinators on the equity team, one of which is Arabic-speaking.

It was clarified that the approved amendment recorded on page 6 of the COW, 19 March 2024 report reflects that Report 24-018, Academic Staffing, 2024-2025, is to be revised to note the commitment of 2.0 FTE staff to support students identifying as Palestinian, Muslim, Arab and/or Arabic-speaking.

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Lee,
THAT the Committee of the Whole Budget report, dated 19
March 2024, be received.**

Carried

11.2.a.a Approval of Academic Staffing

This was a non-consent item and was dealt with later in the meeting under agenda item 11.3.

11.3 Non-Consent Items

Trustee Lyra Evans called point of order, requesting that Trustee Blackburn apologize for making a disparaging comment towards her.

Chair Scott ruled that Trustee Blackburn's microphone was not active and that the comment was not heard by the Chair. Chair Scott suggested that Trustee Lyra Evans discuss her concerns with Trustee Blackburn after the meeting.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT Appendix C to Report 24-018 be amended to increase the vice principal (VP) allocation by 2.0 FTE to be distributed as 0.5 FTE in the remaining four elementary schools which are highest on the Resource Allocation Index based on Socioeconomics (RAISE) Index and do not have a VP allocation (approximately \$263,701.33).

Trustee Lyra Evans introduced her amendment and expressed the importance of increasing VPs in the RAISE schools.

Trustees speaking in favor of the amendment noted that additional VPs will provide support to principals and students with high needs.

Staff noted that administrative designates in schools offer teachers a voluntary position to temporarily assume the principal's role with arrangements made for missing classroom preparation time. This provides an opportunity to experience other administrative roles and aids with future leadership and succession planning.

The OCDSB considers the school population, their needs and the RAISE Index when allocating VPs.

Director Buffone noted that school staff should have leadership development and succession opportunities with flexibility in the vice-principal and principal roles with overlapping responsibilities so that it is a collaborative dynamic of school administration.

Staff noted that superintendents work alongside the Associate Director and Director of Education by bringing forward needs and support required for their schools.

Associate Director Gerrior cautioned about potential cuts due to inflation and that Bill C124 will also apply financial pressure. He suggested that the OCDSB should plan for financial flexibility to address other potential needs which may arise in the future.

Some trustees expressed concern about the allocation budget and resources as the OCDSB is currently in the beginning stage of the budget process with several opportunities in the process to adjust resources as needed.

Some trustees noted the benefit of allocating 1.0 FTE resource to the Arabic-speaking and Muslim community as this allows staff to allocate the other FTE to other demographics of students in need of additional support.

Trustee Milburn assumed the chair.

Trustee Scott noted the extent VPs are needed as some schools function well with administrative designates in their place despite having a larger population or having increased need for support.

Trustee Scott resumed the chair.

Trustee Lyra Evans urged trustees to consider having a leadership position which reflects the identity of the student population with the existing complement of VPs and principals by creating opportunities for educators to take on additional responsibilities.

Trustee Lyra Evans requested a non binding recorded vote on the amendment.

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

THAT Appendix C to Report 24-018 be amended to increase the vice principal (VP) allocation by 2.0 FTE to be distributed as 0.5 FTE in the remaining four elementary schools which are highest on the Resource Allocation Index based on Socioeconomics (RAISE)

Index and do not have a VP allocation (approximately \$263,701.33).

For (3): Justine Bell, Lyra Evans, and Nili Kaplan-Myrth

Against (9): Alysha Aziz, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Jennifer Jennekens, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Defeated (3 to 9)

Trustee Kaplan-Myrth noted that the District should retain the flexibility to allocate 1.0 FTE elsewhere if required.

An amendment moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the word “Palestinian” be struck from the motion.

Chair Scott called the meeting into recess at 8:53 p.m.

Chair Scott called the meeting back to order at 9:04 p.m.

An amendment moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the word “Palestinian” be struck from the motion.

Defeated for lack of a seconder.

Trustee Bell called a point of order, requesting that Trustee Kaplan-Myrth withdraw a statement suggesting that support for Palestinian students is anti-semitic.

Trustee Kaplan-Myrth expressed the view that allocating resources for Palestinian identifying students is inappropriate while there is no additional support being allocated for other groups of students.

An amendment moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the language “2.0 FTE” be replaced with “1.0 FTE”

Trustee Bell called a point of order to query whether it was appropriate for debate to take place regarding the allocation of resources as debate has already taken place at the COW Budget meeting on 19 March 2024.

Chair Scott ruled that debate on the topic was in order as the previous debate had not taken place at a Board meeting.

Director Buffone noted that there is a cycle in place for new staff to join the central team to complement the experienced members on the equity team who then, over time, cycle back into schools creating opportunities to adjust the complement of the central team.

Staff noted that the 2023 School Climate Survey is a voluntary survey sent out on behalf of the District.

An amendment moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the language “2.0 FTE” be replaced with “1.0 FTE”

Defeated

An amendment moved by Trustee Aziz, seconded by Trustee Presley,

THAT the amendment to the motion be replaced with the following language:

THAT the Addendum to Report 24-018 be revised to reflect the commitment of 1.0 FTE resource to support students who identify as Palestinian, Arab, and/or Arabic-speaking and 1.0 FTE resource for students who identify as Muslim.

Trustees speaking in favour of the amendment expressed the importance of having 1.0 FTE resource for Muslim students and one for Palestinian, Arab and/or Arabic-speaking students to accommodate the difference in culture and to ensure that equal representation for both communities was highlighted.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Aziz,

THAT the the words “resource” be replace with “equity coach”

Director Buffone noted that maintaining the language “resource” in the amendment will allow the equity team flexibility to ensure the Board’s ability to adapt to staff movement within the organization.

Staff noted that a support equity coach may not be an educator but rather, an individual who is connected to and can engage with the community while providing support for students.

To ensure there are two instructional coaches who are Muslim or Arabic-speaking, the Board will need to hire into the vacancies that come up within the renewal cycle, whereas student support coordinators do not have a renewal cycle. Currently, the OCDSB has allocated three equity coach positions, one of which is designated for the Jewish community.

Superintendent Farrish noted that having one person to represent all Arabic-speaking students and engage in their communities is challenging as identity expression varies from communities.

Trustee Milburn assumed the chair.

Trustee Scott noted that using the language “equity coaches” rather than “resource” will restrict the position to a teaching role and the language used to describe the different positions was noted as members on the equity team are referred to as coaches.

Trustee Scott resumed the chair.

Trustee Kaplan-Myrth called a point of order seeking clarification for the language of the sub-amendment. Chair Scott clarified that the sub-amendment would replace “resource” in both sections where it occurs in the amendment.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Aziz,

THAT the the words “resource” be replaced with “equity coach”

Defeated.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Dickson,

The Trustee Aziz’s amendment be replaced with the following language:

THAT the Addendum to Report 24-018 be revised to reflect the commitment of 1.0 FTE equity coach to support students who identify as Palestinian, Arab, and/or Arabic-speaking and 1.0 FTE resource to support students who identify as Muslim.

Trustee Lyra Evans called a point of order to query whether the sub-amendment is substantially different from splitting the last vote in two halves and voting separately.

Chair Scott clarified that the query is in order as the previous sub-amendment could not be changed with the language suggested in the current sub-amendment.

In response to a query, it was noted that an equity coach would need to be hired, without additional budget allocation, to support students who identify as Palestinian, Arab or are Arabic-speaking. The identity and skill would also need to be taken into consideration; however, some trustees suggested that resource allocation should be at the discretion of the staff.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Dickson,

The Trustee Aziz’s amendment be replaced with the following language:

THAT the Addendum to Report 24-018 be revised to reflect the commitment of 1.0 FTE equity coach to support students who identify as

Palestinian, Arab, and/or Arabic-speaking and 1.0 FTE resource to support students who identify as Muslim.

Defeated.

Chair Scott called the meeting into recess at 10:11 p.m.

Chair Scott called the meeting back to order at 10:18 p.m.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth, seconded by Trustee Dickson,

THAT the Addendum to Report 24-018 be revised to reflect the commitment of 1.0 FTE resource to support students who identify as Palestinian, Arab, and/or Arabic-speaking and/or Muslim and 1.0 FTE resource to support students who are identified by the Equity Team.

Superintendent Farrish noted the commitment needed to support students from Muslim, Palestinian and Arabic-speaking communities and urged trustees to consider the hiring process as it needs to reflect and represent the school community.

Moved by Trustee Presley, seconded by Trustee Milburn,

THAT debate be closed.

Carried

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth, seconded by Trustee Dickson,

THAT the Addendum to Report 24-018 be revised to reflect the commitment of 1.0 FTE resource to support students who identify as Palestinian, Arab, and/or Arabic-speaking and 1.0 FTE resource to support students who are identified by the Equity Team.

Defeated.

An amendment moved by Trustee Aziz, seconded by Trustee Presley,

THAT the amendment to the motion be replaced with the following language:

THAT the Addendum to Report 24-018 be revised to reflect the commitment of 1.0 FTE resource to support students who identify as Palestinian, Arab, and/or Arabic-speaking and 1.0 FTE resource for students who identify as Muslim.

Carried

Moved by Matthew Lee

Seconded by Lyra Evans

THAT the Academic Staffing Plan for 2024-2025, as set out in the addendum (attached as Appendix A) and Appendices A, B and C to Report 24-018 (attached as Appendices B, C, D), be approved, subject to adjustments related to fluctuations in projected and actual enrolment, as amended as follows:

THAT the Addendum to Report 24-018 be revised to reflect the commitment of 1.0 FTE resource to support students who identify as Palestinian, Arab, and/or Arabic-speaking and 1.0 FTE resource for students who identify as Muslim.

For (12): Alysha Aziz, Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

The 10:30 vote did not obtain unanimous consent to continue the meeting

At the time of adjournment, items 11.4. OPSBA Policy Resolution, 12.1. Report 24-054, Valuing Voices - Identity Matters Student Survey Administration, 13. Board Work Plan, 14. Matters for Information, and 15. New Business were not dealt with.

Lynn Scott, Chair of the Board