



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

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

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Trustees Present: Alysha Aziz (electronic communication), Justine Bell (electronic communication), Donna Blackburn (electronic communication), Donna Dickson (electronic communication), Lyra Evans, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Jennifer Jennekens, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley (electronic communication), Lynn Scott, Emma Hong (Student Trustee), Malaika Kamanzi (Student Trustee)

Staff Present: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director of Education), Randy Gerrior (Associate Director, Business Operations), Michèle Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), James Proulx (Executive Officer, Information Technology and Digital Transformation), Paula Hall (Superintendent of People, Culture and Leadership), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Instruction), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Stacey Kay (General Manager, Learning Support Services), Emily Balla (Mental Health Lead, Learning Support Services), Claire Reynolds (Program Evaluation Officer, Learning Support Services), Amanda Anderson (Vice-Principal, Business and Learning Technologies), Sandy Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (General Manager, Communications & Information Services), Nicole Guthrie (General Manager of Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Central Audio/Visual Technical Specialist), Mellissa Applewaithe (Board/Committee Coordinator)

Non-Voting Representatives Present: Lili Miller (IEC), Seema Lamba (ACE), Jean Fulton-Hale (OCSSAN), Tom Holloway (OCASC), Jamieson Dyer (OCETA)

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

Vice-Chair Milburn called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Vice-Chair Milburn acknowledged that this 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. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Trustee Jennekens,
THAT the agenda be approved.**

Carried

5. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Trustee Scott reported the following:

- The Valuing Voices Identity Matters survey launched and is open until 10 May 2024; and
- The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) is seeking a community member to serve on the Audit Committee with financial expertise and business knowledge for a three-year term.

6. Briefing from the Director

Director Buffone reported the following:

- The Elementary Program Review consultation has now been launched;
- Learning Support Services (LSS) will host an event at the Confederation Education Centre to assist secondary students with disabilities to navigate and succeed in the workplace. The event will be held on 2 May 2024; and
- The Bill Mason Outdoor Education Centre will hold the annual Open Trails Day on 4 May 2024.

7. Delegations

7.1 Tamara Taub, re Expression of Identity

Tamara Taub shared her views regarding the expression of identity.

She expressed her concern regarding information gathered via independent surveys where Jewish students have reported feeling unsafe or have experienced antisemitic incidents within the OCDSB system.

Tamara Taub expressed the opinion that the OCDSB should adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IRA) definition of

antisemitism and engage a recognized Jewish organization to assist in educating staff in identifying antisemitism.

8. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

8.1 Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE), 29 February 2024

Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the report from the Advisory Committee on Equity, dated 29 February 2024, be received.

Carried

8.2 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), 6 March 2024

Moved by Trustee Scott,

THAT the report from the Special Education Advisory Committee, dated 6 March 2024, be received.

Carried

9. Matters for Discussion:

9.1 Report 24-057, Technology Plan (J. Proulx)

Your Committee had before it Report 24-057, providing information on the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Technology Plan. Executive Officer Proulx provided an overview of the report.

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

- Staff expect to bring a report focused on the Equitable Access to Technology Plan for students and staff to trustees at a future date;
- Business and Learning Technologies (B<) plans to use the 2024-2025 school year to develop an Artificial Intelligence framework to assist educators in the use of technology within the classroom. The framework will be implemented in the 2025-2026 year;
- The framework will intersect with other areas where foundational planning is underway within the District, including literacy, numeracy and critical thinking skills;
- B< is collaborating with the Research, Evaluation and Analytics Department (READ) to develop consultation surveys for the collection of informative data;
- The District expects to review students' use of cellphones in school during the 2024-2025 school year;

Trustee Jennekens assumed the chair.

- Staff clarified that at the time the report was written, the benchmark measure of progress that indicated a minimum internet speed of 0.5Mbps per user has since doubled;

Trustee Milburn resumed the chair.

- Staff are working to identify the increase in the effective use of technology by staff in the future by examining data from the original technology plan and current surveys;
- The District plans to address the challenge of having staff complete surveys by utilizing a combined qualitative and quantitative approach;
- The B< Academic Team will lead the integration of technology and set expectations for how students should engage with technology; and
- B< is currently in the financial planning process and is developing a forecast to estimate projected costs for the next 8 years.

The meeting went into recess at 8:04 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:11 p.m.

9.2 Report 24-058, Mental Health Strategy (P. Symmonds)

Your Committee had before it Report 24-058, providing information on the Mental Health Strategy. Mental Health Lead Balla provided an overview of the report.

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

- The Ministry of Education (MOE) Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 169 requires that all school boards create a three-year mental health strategy and an annual action plan;
- Staff are awaiting results from the 2023 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS). Preliminary reports from the community indicate mental health needs are returning to pre-pandemic levels;
- Staff will provide an annual mental health action plan to trustees that will be available to the public;
- The updated mental health strategy will be built on three pillars, Belonging, Building and Bridging;

- Staff plan to build student leadership and to hold an annual mental health symposium;
- LSS works in collaboration with the program evaluator for LSS as well as staff from READ to evaluate programs delivered to ensure they are evidence informed;
- Educators have been provided with professional development on student mental health. A change in a student's baseline behavior can be indicative of a mental health concern;
- Staff highlighted the mental health resources available on the OCDSB website including Mental Health in Action: Parents/Caregivers, Mental Health in Action: Students and resources for educators through the staff portal;
- LSS works closely with the Communications, Equity and Inclusion Teams, READ, Safe Schools and Program and Learning Innovation (P&LI) to align work in support of student mental health;
- A concern was raised that there are cases where it would not be in the student's best interest to share information with their family. Staff noted that this is taken into consideration and decisions would be made in collaboration with the mental health team, administrator and superintendent; and
- A report will be forthcoming that highlights how we are measuring academic success and student well-being.

10. Information Items:

10.1 Report from OPSBA (if required)

Trustee Scott reported that there is an Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Board of Directors meeting on 26 and 27 April 2024.

10.2 OSTA Update (if required)

There was no OSTA update.

11. New Business - Information and Inquiries

There was no new business.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Cathryne Milburn, Chair

