



Committee of the Whole (PUBLIC)

7 May 2024

Report No. 24-060

Naming of the New Elementary School in Findlay Creek

Key Contact:

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PURPOSE:

1. To make a recommendation for the naming of the new elementary school in Findlay Creek.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. The naming of the new elementary school in Findlay Creek aligns with the OCDSB Strategic Plan, particularly in the pillar of Learning, where the District aims to enhance program quality and accessibility for all students who reside in the catchment area. The modern and accessible design of the new school, constructed with current specifications and environmentally sustainable features, supports the District's focus on social responsibility.

The community-based process for school naming reflects the District's commitment to engaging with the community. The school naming committee has been highly successful in actively involving community members throughout the school naming process.

CONTEXT:

3. The OCDSB is building a new elementary school in Findlay Creek. A key step in establishing a new school is the school naming process. The OCDSB has an established process for school naming which is documented in Policy P.107.SCO and Procedure PR.630.SCO for Naming of Schools and Educational Support Facilities (attached as Appendix A and B). Working with an Algonquin Elder, members of the parent community, students and staff, we have been able to bring forward a recommended name.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. A New School for the Findlay Creek Community
Findlay Creek, situated in the southern part of the District, is a fast growing community. The new JK-6 school, situated at 820 Miikana Road in Findlay Creek, will offer both English and Early French Immersion programs. It is anticipated to open with approximately 457 students, drawing from the community currently served by Vimy Ridge Public School. The construction of the new school is expected to finish in August 2024, with plans for it to open in September 2024.
5. School Naming Policy and Procedure
Policy P.107. SCO and Procedure PR.630.SCO-Naming of Schools and Educational Support Facilities establish the process and criteria for naming new schools. A key step is ensuring that each new school establishes a School Naming Committee to consult with the community on possible names, review the suggestions and make a recommendation for the new school name.
6. Criteria for School Naming
Selection of the names for all new schools is made as follows:
 - i. in honour of a famous Canadian event, achievement of individual; or
 - ii. in recognition of an individual for outstanding lifetime contribution to the educational community; or
 - iii. in recognition of a local historical contribution by a resident or family; or
 - iv. the street, road, major thoroughfare or geographical feature on which, or near to where, the school is located; or
 - v. the village, town, subdivision or community in which the school is located.
7. School Naming Committee
In February 2024, families within the new school community were encouraged to propose names for the upcoming school and indicate their interest in participating in the naming committee. The school naming committee was created in April 2024, composed of 9 community members, an Indigenous Elder, the new principal, and the superintendent.

At the outset, the committee members received an overview of the process, background information, and were encouraged to avoid selecting names that are similar to existing school names or are politically partisan. They were also encouraged to consider land-based and geographic-based names. The committee's task was to establish a community-based, consultative approach to select names for the new school.

The School Naming Committee considered and shared the following names, listed in order of priority, with the Director's Executive Council.

i. **Mino Miikan Elementary School**

Mino Miikan translates to "the good path" in the Algonquin language. The committee saw it as a representation of a positive beginning for students, opening many doors for students - a journey towards learning, growth, and community contribution. They believe the name resonates with the area of Findlay Creek known as Pathways and has a connection with Miikana Dr., the street where the school is situated.

Choosing a name with an Algonquin background is seen by the committee as a meaningful step towards reconciliation and is in line with the OCDSB Strategic Plans focus on social responsibility. An Algonquin-named school offers valuable learning opportunities for students and the school community as they delve deeper into the history of the Algonquin people.

ii. **Pathways Elementary School:**

The community where the school is being built is known as Pathways. This selection aligns with the criteria outlined in the naming procedure, as it references the geographical area and carries a positive meaning. The term "pathways" reflects the inclusive environment of the school, which welcomes students from diverse backgrounds. It symbolizes the various cultural journeys students have undertaken to reach this area. Additionally, it represents the optimistic opportunities the school provides for students to learn, define their own success and explore their passions as they embark on their educational journey.

iii. **Miikan Elementary School:**

Miikan, an Algonquin word meaning "the path," holds significance that aptly reflects the essence of the community. Furthermore, it symbolizes the educational journey students embark upon as they grow into proactive members of society, fostering a positive impact. This name choice emphasizes the school's commitment to guiding students along their paths to success and empowerment, while also honoring the rich cultural heritage of the Algonquin people.

The School Naming Committee is recommending that the new elementary school in Findlay Creek be named Mino Miikan Elementary School. The alternate name presented is Pathways Elementary School.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8. The promotion and consultation associated with the school naming process was completed at no cost except for human resources. There will

be costs associated with signage for the new school once the name is established. This cost is included in the budget for all new school construction.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION:

9. In order to engage the students and the new school community, the school principal met with students during regular visits to Vimy Ridge Public School and Robert Bateman Public School as well as engaging parents and members of the school community in providing naming suggestions.

An initial survey was shared with students in Grade 5 at Vimy Ridge, parents/guardians and the community in late February and March to solicit potential names for the new elementary school. On 2 April 2024, the committee met to review the approximate 50 school name submissions made by students, parents, staff and community members. Upon consideration of the submissions and names generated through conversations with Algonquin elder Albert Dumont coupled with the OCDSB guidelines for school names, the committee started the process of short listing names.

Based on the survey feedback, it seems that many parents preferred the name Mikana Elementary School. The school is built on Miikana road, which is an Ojibwe word meaning path. Comments shared about the name were that it is easy to remember, it is a gateway for many paths for students and it has an Indigenous connection to the land. Albert Dumont proposed instead that an Algonquin word such as Mikan or Mino Miikan be considered given the territory where the school exists.

After deliberation, the committee opted in favor of an Algonquin name as the recommendation for the new elementary school in Findlay Creek.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the new Findlay Creek elementary school located in Ottawa at 820 Miikana Road in Findlay Creek, be named Mino Miikan Elementary School, effective September 2024.

Marva Major
Superintendent of Instruction

Pino Buffone
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

APPENDICES

Appendix A Policy P.107.SCO

Appendix B Procedure PR.630.SCO-Naming of Schools and Educational Support Facilities

Appendix C New Findlay Creek Naming Committee