



PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

6:00 pm

Trustees' Committee Room

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Members: Diana Mills, Alexandra Arraiz, Calla Barnett, Seyi Okuribido-Malcolm, Mohammed Saleem, Vicki Arkinstall, Alison Kinahan (Parents for Diversity), Alison Telford, Tabassum Khan, Fartun Farah (Centre for Resilience & Social Development)

Non-Voting Members: Suzanne Nash (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Naya Markanastasakis (Principal, Pinecrest Public School), Samah Suliman (Family and Community Engagement Coordinator)

Staff and Guests: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Tristan Reid (Student Senate), Kathy Mak (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Chair Mills called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Chair Mills 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. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Alexandra Arraiz,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Due to Superintendent Duah's absence, item 6.1.a Developing Awareness: Sub-Committees - 2024-2025 was deferred to a future meeting.

Moved by Alexandra Arraiz,

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

Carried

4. Presentations

4.1 Elementary Program Review (P. Buffone)

Director Buffone provided an overview of the Elementary Program Review, which the Board of Trustees approved at the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on 2 April 2024.

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

- An environmental scan will be conducted throughout the province to help inform decisions when reviewing and/or revising the program model(s);
- Staff will collaborate with researchers from the University of Ottawa, for instance, to analyze feedback for the Elementary Program Review throughout spring season and a possible program model(s) will be developed in the beginning of summer going into fall of 2024;
- Staff plan to receive feedback from students from Grade 7 to 12 as they will be able to provide recent lived elementary experience, as well as students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 through themselves or their parents/guardians/caregivers;
- The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) is developing a series of frameworks that will be based on a foundation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction (DI) which will prioritize accessibility and implement Culturally-Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP). The framework supporting students and families will include literacy and numeracy, social responsibility and human rights, mental health and well-being, health and safety, and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI);

Calla Barnett assumed the chair.

- Director Buffone noted school closures are not the goal for the Elementary Program Review and the Ministry currently has a moratorium in place;
- Currently the Ministry has a Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline allowing a certain percentage of change to be made and there will be a period in the program review where the ideal grade configuration will be compromised during transitions. The Pupil Accommodation Review guidelines ensure the OCDSB honor the moratorium on school closures; however, significant change from the Program Review will require time;

- Trustee Scott expressed concern as schools currently are not large enough to hold a dual track program. While there are some healthy single stream immersion schools, the OCDSB must ensure there are enough students in the vicinity of the school;
- The Board aims to diversify staff in schools so students may have equal quality of support without moving between programs;

Diana Mills resumed the chair.

- The provision of different programs in schools have been echoed as the OCDSB aims to avoid streaming at an early age;
- Director Buffone noted the intent of the Elementary Program Review is to address the streaming and equity issues created by existing programs;
- The OCDSB aims to balance freedom of expression and identity without causing harm to others; however, additional work still needs to be done on cultural proficiency; and
- Trustee Scott noted the importance of the Program Review and the value of listening to the community's feedback especially those who are not often heard as this will create the pressure for change.

5. Reports

5.1 PIC Report, 17 January 2024

Moved by Calla Barnett,

THAT the Parent Involvement Committee report dated 17 January 2024 be received.

Carried

5.2 PIC Report, 14 February 2024

Moved by Calla Barnett,

THAT the Parent Involvement Committee report dated 14 February 2024 be received.

Allison Kinahan reported that she was present for this meeting and that her name should be included in the report.

Moved by Calla Barnett,

THAT the Parent Involvement Committee report dated 14 February 2024 be received, as amended.

Carried

5.3 Superintendent's Report

There was no update for the Superintendent's Report.

5.4 Chair's Report

Chair Mill provided her report and noted the following:

- Chair Mill's term for Chair for the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) will end in November 2024. She urged members to consider nominations for the upcoming positions; and
- Chair Mills noted that PIC will hold another informal committee gathering to provide an opportunity for members to get to know each other.

6. Standing Items

6.1 Updates from Workplan Subcommittees

a. Developing Awareness: Sub-Committees - 2024-2025

Due to the absence of Superintendent Duah, this item was deferred to the 8 May 2024 PIC meeting.

6.2 Board and Committee Reports

a. Board, Committee of Whole, Committee of Whole Budget

There was no update provided.

b. Ad Hoc and Advisory Committees

Vice Chair Barnett provided an update regarding policies pertaining PIC and noted the following:

- A new risk management policy, Trustee pregnancy and parental leave policy, and changes to the student transfer appeal process were recommended at the Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee meeting; and
- It was noted that Cooperative Education will be expanding to become more experientially based and will also include land based learning.

7. New Business

Chair Mills noted that PIC members will be staffing a table on 18 April 2024 for Community Connection for Zone 12. This event will provide an opportunity for families to connect with community organizations and to receive information regarding OCDSB programs.

Calla Barnett assumed the chair.

In response to a inquiry from Diana Mills, Director Buffone noted the District cannot comment on the ongoing investigation regarding a student death in the community. He added that a commitment will be made to follow up regarding inquiries available for student and community support.

While the OCDSB does not discourage the integration of technology, a number of large institutions of public education have voiced their concern regarding the impact social media has on students' learning and well-being. The OCDSB has joined other school boards in a mass tort litigation against the three social media giant; Meta Inc., Snap Inc., and Byte Dance LLC as these companies have developed algorithms to promote compulsive utilization by its users with no end goal function. The aim of the litigation is to have the algorithm redesigned so it does not promote compulsive behaviours in children.

Director Buffone had noted that the legal firm representing the school boards for the litigation will be compensated through the money awarded from the mass tort and additional money from the litigation will be used to provide additional support for student mental health needs and compensation of damages done to school properties.

Diana Mills resumed the chair.

8. Upcoming Meeting Dates

The upcoming meeting dates were provided for information.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Diana Mills, Chair, Parent
Involvement Committee