



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

Tuesday, June 4, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

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

Staff Present: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director of Education), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), James Proulx (Executive Officer, Information Technology and Digital Transformation), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Marva Major (Superintendent of Instruction), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel), Sandra Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (General Manager, Communications & Information Services), Jacqueline Lawrence (Diversity and Equity Advisor), Juliet Robinson (System Principal, Equity and Inclusive Initiatives), Courtney O'Halloran (Principal), Rachelle Sintic (Principal), Jody Kohoko (Principal), Nicole Guthrie (General Manager of Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Central Audio/Visual Technical Specialist), Kathy Mak (Board/Committee Coordinator)

Non-Voting Representatives Present: Lili Miller (IEC), Jamieson Dyer (OCEOTA), Seema Lamba (ACE), Andrew Nordman (OCEOC), Stephanie Kirkey (OSSTF - District 25)

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

Vice-Chair Milburn called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 Nash,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

5. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

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

- A staff-recommended budget was presented to the Committee of the Whole (COW) Budget on 3 June 2024. Community members can view and provide feedback on the budget through the Engage Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) Platform until 10 June 2024;
- OCDSB schools raised more than \$218,100 through the Terry Fox School Run during September 2023; and
- June is National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day is on 21 June 2024. Students and staff across the District are encouraged to continue to learn and celebrate the diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

6. Briefing from the Director

During the briefing from Associate Director Reynolds, the following information was provided:

- Associate Director Reynolds thanked everyone who attended the in-person and virtual sessions to discuss the Elementary Program Review (EPR);
- The Student Achievement Through Equity (SATE) team has organized additional sessions for families at Robert E. Wilson Public School, Queen Mary Public School, Pinecrest Public School, York Street Public School, Charles H. Hulse Public School and Carleton Heights Public School. Feedback through Engage OCDSB will be accepted until 18 June 2024;
- The OCDSB offers summer language classes and camps for students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 from 2 July 2024 to 26 July 2024. Registration will be open until 14 June 2024; and
- Professional Activity (PA) day for all elementary schools will be on 7 June 2024, there will be no classes for elementary students and EarlyON Centers will be closed. The PA Day will allow educators to work on assessment and evaluation of student progress for term 2.

7. Delegations

There were no delegations.

8. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

8.1 Indigenous Education Council (IEC), 18 April 2024

Moved by Trustee Scott,

THAT the report from the Indigenous Education Council Committee (IEC), dated 18 April 2024, be received.

Carried

8.2 Audit Committee, 15 May 2024

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the report from the Audit Committee, dated 15 May 2024, be received.

Carried

9. Matters for Discussion:

9.1 Report 24-087, Draft 2024-2028 Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap (MJ. Farrish)

Your Committee had before it for discussion Report 24-087, Draft 2024-2028 Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap (the Roadmap) to provide an update on the status of the renewed Roadmap for the 2024-2028 school year.

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

- Significant research was done prior to the development of the Roadmap. One key area of focus was building capacity through training to address conflict. The OCDSB has participated in a number of anti-semitism training sessions and continues to build relationships with members of the Jewish community. This work will continue in the new Roadmap;
- While the specific term “antisemitism” is not seen within the Roadmap, the Equity Department continues to consider any minoritized group to be part of the work that is undertaken within the Roadmap;
- Trustee Kaplan-Myrth and Trustee Scott stressed the importance of addressing antisemitism and including the words “wellbeing” and “safety” in the Roadmap;
- The Roadmap will incorporate the concept of celebrating diversity while creating a common ground, where possible. This will be more explicit once the Roadmap reaches the stage of preparing school-based plans;

- The OCDSB collaborated with four departments to develop the anti-hate toolkit and aims to create a shift in practice by ensuring the toolkit reaches more employee groups;
- The Roadmap does not represent operational details, but rather it includes sets of compass direction, markers and language that will be used as a guide to achieve the changes outlined within the Roadmap;
- To build capacity in schools, the Equity team includes intersecting identities amongst its team members. The partnerships that are brought in ensure the culture carriers work alongside students to impact the experience, access, and outcomes. There will not be individual strategies or references to staffing assignments in the Roadmap, instead staff will be analyzing and examining sets of data throughout the lifespan of the plan to measure for transformation;
- A list of definitions and terms will accompany the Roadmap;
- With respect to key indicators and policies, the District is currently reviewing and updating human rights and equity policies to update the language. A tracking mechanism for shifts that occur within the framework will be developed and the analysis will include educators who helped develop the framework and those who utilize it. Indicators that were used in the previous Roadmap will be carried over for comparative analysis purposes;
- Key indicators will be used to track the progress of the Roadmap and to guide decision making;
- The OCDSB aims to connect with students and families with respect to their senses of belonging, safety and well-being;
- The final analysis will provide insight in training requirements for crucial areas, and the shift in thinking among staff will be tracked;
- Currently there is no target for the number of policies that may require changes. The final transformative equity space will show different stakeholders and their own accountabilities. Currently this is under the capacity building component of the educators' work as well as the programming and support. The Roadmap compass will guide the work. Educators will share their own area of accountability to allow them to see themselves in the Roadmap;
- The OCDSB has organized focus sessions with students to help them understand the Roadmap, and provide an opportunity to listen to student voices and understand their experiences;

- The main objective through an Indigenous lens is to center Indigenous voices, knowledge and pedagogy that will be equal to Eurocentric knowledge and to build capacity among educators;
- The six focus areas, goals and critical key indicators were carried over from the previous Roadmap, however 90% of the priorities have shifted due to the focus on practice as opposed to infrastructure. The structure has also been updated in the current Roadmap as it indicates the goal, the narrative context and the importance of it;
- Further information was provided by the community regarding the shift in terms of narratives, access opportunities and outcomes. The Roadmap supports system leaders, educators, and families to understand the shift in language based on quantitative data and lived experiences;
- Rather than concrete numbers, the compass direction will allow flexibility and movement to the work as there may be resistance to equity at this point. The compass will ensure there is continuous movement;
- The key indicators include not only infrastructure elements but also practices as the OCDSB continues to improve those areas as the District move through the final stages of analysis;
- The Roadmap is a living document that will continuously change and evolve. The OCDSB aims to develop an annual measurement framework on progress in critical areas to identify students who require support in a timely manner;
- Superintendent Farrish agreed to follow up on the budget allocation for guidance counsellors and/or graduation coaches;
- Trustee Kaplan-Myrth expressed the opinion that Jewish staff and students do not feel safe in schools and noted her concern about the Board's accountability in addressing anti-semitism. Superintendent Farrish noted that school based incidents of anti-semitism are addressed using a progressive discipline and restorative practices. The OCDSB anti-hate tool kit will be educative and corrective and includes various modules to build capacity;
- The Roadmap will not have a public consultation as this document is constantly changing;
- Trustee Lyra Evans stressed the importance of putting a quantitative number to set goals in order to demonstrate accountability and measure achievements. Superintendent Farrish noted that if a number represents a transformative experience then

those markers can be used as strategies to achieve the compass direction. She added that this is a continual dialogue to understand the concreteness of the targets and the work needed to be done to achieve those goals;

- Lili Miller urged the Board to accept the possibility of failing when setting a high goal as this indicates the Board's willingness to take action and see results;
- Trustee Scott noted that numerical measures may not always indicate the success of targets such as student success or graduation rates as there are numerous significant factors that come into play that are out of the District's control and can significantly impact the results. She added that numerical expectation can be useful, but there is a risk of it being misinterpreted by the public;

Trustee Jennekens assumed the Chair.

- The OCDSB will be working in alignment with the 2024 data that is expected to be available in the late Fall of 2024. Currently it is undecided what measurement will be present in the framework as comparable data is required in some areas;

Trustee Milburn resumed the Chair.

- Trustee Lyra Evans urged the District to consider doing statistical analysis to create specific number targets for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for further discussion or information at a future Board meeting;
- The School Climate survey, combined with the Valuing Voices survey, is used by schools to measure, understand, and respond to trends. This tool continues to be institutionalized to collect quantitative and qualitative data;
- Executive Officer Giroux advised that there is a difference between what the District can do with data it has gathered, and conducting a research project as ethics, requirements, and consent must be taken into consideration; and
- Intersectionality with socioeconomic status is part of the work.

10. Information Items:

10.1 Report from OPSBA (if required)

There was no report from the OPSBA representatives.

10.2 OSTA Update (if required)

There was no OSTA update.

11. New Business - Information and Inquiries

Trustee Kaplan-Myrth reported that there has been an increased number of class cancellations due to a lack of occasional staff. Associate Director Reynolds noted that the OCDSB has seen changing trends in staff absenteeism and available occasional staff to replace absent educators. A number of strategies are seen to be successful and the number of class closures is declining. Staff continues to explore opportunities to address this issue.

Data on class closures is collected for operational reasons; however, it is not in a format that can be shared at this time.

Trustees expressed concern as class closures pose a challenge for families to find alternative arrangements for their young children in lower grades. Trustee Nash suggested adjusting staffing so students in higher grades can stay home on their own and continue their lessons online.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Cathryne Milburn, Chair