



## BOARD PUBLIC MINUTES

**Tuesday, September 24, 2024, 7:30 pm**  
**Board Room**  
**Administration Building**  
**133 Greenbank Road**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**

- Trustees: Lynn Scott (Chair), Catherine Milburn (Vice Chair), Justine Bell (electronic communication), Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, Jeffrey Zhang (Student Trustee), Sharanya Sivasathiyanathan (Student Trustee), Ezio De Stefano (Student Trustee)
- Staff: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director, Academic), Janice McCoy (Executive Officer), Amy Hannah (Superintendent of Education), Jesse Mark (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel, Legal Services), James Proulx (Executive Officer, Technological Support Services), Sandy Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Julie Cyr (General Manager, Early Learning), Diane Pernari (General Manager, Communications & Information Services), Susan Baker (General Manager, Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Multimedia Coordinator -Communications), Tamara Persaud (Board/Committee Coordinator)
- Guests: Emily Addison (Co-Chair, Alternative Schools Advisory Committee) and Carolyn Webb (Co-Chair Alternative Schools Advisory Committee)

1. Call to Order -- Chair of the Board

Chair Lynn Scott called the public meeting to order at 7:55 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Homelands

Chair Lynn Scott 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. Report from In Camera Session

The Board met in camera this evening and Vice-Chair Milburn reported that there were no recommendations.

5. Approval of the Agenda

**Moved by Trustee Nash, seconded by Trustee Dickson,**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**Carried**

6. Advisory Committee Presentation

6.1 Alternative Schools Advisory Committee

The Co-Chairs of the Alternative School Advisory Committee (ASAC), Emily Addison and Carolyn Webb provided an overview of the 2023-2024 Alternative Schools Advisory Committee (ASAC) Annual Report and plans for the current school year. They highlighted the 7 tenets that guide the Program's pedagogical approach and provided recommendations on new approaches to the alternative program.

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was noted:

- A new principal profile for alternative school principals was approved and put in place for kindergarten to grade six schools, in development with the four alternative elementary schools;
- The process has begun to clarify and further develop the language of the seven tenets of the committee and share these practices with the committee;
- ASAC requested the data on the profile of students in the program who have special needs for use in program development;
- Co-Chair of ASAC, Emily Addison, shared that the alternative schools program has continued to support students in the areas of alternate learning styles, social and emotional learning, family engagement and sustainable use of resources;
- It was recommended that a strong communication system be implemented among alternative schools and to incrementally designate additional alternative schools in the next 5 years based on readiness;
- Trustee Lynn Scott noted that the ASAC team will have an opportunity to participate in the Elementary Program Review consultation in the fall;
- It was acknowledged that a disproportionate number of students with special needs are being streamed out of French Immersion

programs. To address this, it was recommended that the ratio of teachers to students with special needs and/or IEPs be altered. Based on the ratios indicated by the Ministry of Education, there is an allowance of 10% over the capacity; and

- The importance of multi-age grouping and embracing split grades was highlighted to promote broader learning and community based mentorship within schools.

#### 7. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

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

- Ezio de Stefano, Sharanya Sivasathiyathan, and Jeffrey Zhang were welcomed as the three new Student Trustees for the 2024-2025 school year;
- Rowan's Law day will be held on 25 September 2024 to honour the memory of an OCDSB student, Rowan Stinger, who died as a result of head injuries she sustained while playing rugby in 2013. Annually, the day is dedicated to promoting awareness of concussions and the importance of having strategies to prevent, identify, and manage them. To mark this day, OCDSB schools had in-class education and discussions about concussions and concussion safety;
- On 23 September 2024, Maplewood Secondary School was opened to staff and students. Gratitude was extended to the OCDSB staff who made this possible and thanked the Maplewood community for their patience and understanding during the construction delays. Excitement was expressed for the new chapter in the community;
- 30 September 2024 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a day of mourning and remembrance for everyone, especially the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, that offers an opportunity to reflect and honour survivors, their families, and their communities. Orange Shirt Day is also held on this day as well, to recognize and educate students and communities on the sad history and legacy of Canadian residential schools. She thanked educators, other staff, and community partners across the District for their efforts to highlight this learning and reflection, as it is vital part of our collective commitment to reconciliation; and
- The election for school council members must be held within 30 days of the start of the school year. Any parent/caregiver of a student enrolled in the school can be elected as a member of the school council.

#### 8. Briefing from the Director

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

- The Education Foundation is seeking candidates to serve on the Board of Directors. More details are found on their website at [educationfoundationottawa.ca](http://educationfoundationottawa.ca). The deadline for application is on 4 October 2024;
- Many upcoming 'Heritage Months, including Ukrainian, Hispanic and Latin American, German and Hungarian Heritage Months, are in October. He noted that October is an important time for Islamic cultural heritage to recognize the contributions of Muslim scholars and scientists in medicine;
- Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, begins at sundown on 2 October 2024 and continues until 4 October 2024. It marks the start of the year 5785 and the beginning of the Ten Days of Awe, which will conclude with Yom Kippur;
- There is a Professional Activity Day on 27 September 2024, for all OCDSB schools. There will be no classes for students, students, and school staff will participate in learning that focuses on key Ministry priorities: literacy and numeracy, and student well-being and safety; and

In response to queries, the following information was noted:

- Maplewood Secondary school opened on 23 September 2024. Remaining renovations will continue for a few weeks in a number of areas of the school such as the gymnasium, as is common with new builds.

9. Delegations

There were no delegations.

10. Confirmation of Board Minutes

10.1 24 June 2024

**Moved by Trustee Presely, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,**

**THAT the Board Minutes, dated 24 June 2024, be confirmed.**

**Carried**

10.2 19 August 2024 Special Board Meeting

**Moved by Trustee Presely, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,**

**THAT the Special Board Minutes, dated 19 August 2024, be confirmed.**

**Carried**

10.3 10 September 2024 Special Board Meeting

**Moved by Trustee Presely, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,**

**THAT the Special Board Minutes, dated 10 September 2024, be confirmed.**

**Carried**

11. Business Arising from Board Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

12. Matters for Action

12.1 Receipt of Committee of the Whole Report

12.1.a 10 September 2024

**Moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Blackburn,**

**THAT the Committee of the Whole report, dated 10 September 2024, be received.**

**Carried**

12.2 Receipt of Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee Report

12.2.a 12 September 2024

Moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the Receipt of Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee Report be received.

It was noted that Trustee Blackburn should be recorded as a member of the committee.

**Moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,**

**THAT the Receipt of Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee Report be received, as amended.**

**Carried**

12.2.a.a Rescission of Board Policy P.012.GOV

**Moved by** Lyra Evans

**Seconded by** Cathryne Milburn

**THAT Policy P.048.GOV Board Guiding Principles be rescinded.**

For (11): 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 (11 to 0)**

12.2.a.b Approval of Revised Policy P.018.GOV Electronic Meetings of the Board and Committees

Vice-Chair Trustee Millburn assumed the chair.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Lee,

THAT Policy P.018.GOV Electronic Meetings of the Board and Committees and Meeting Attendance, attached as Appendix B to Report 24-104, be approved.

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was noted:

- Trustee Scott expressed concern that the list of exemptions to participate electronically places an unfair burden on the trustees and chairs who may be affected.

An amendment moved by Trustee Scott, seconded by Trustee Lee,

THAT Policy P.018.GOV Electronic Meetings of the Board and Committees be amended to include the following definitions:

Disability means a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability; c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; d) a mental disorder; or e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997. The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go.

Weather conditions refers to a variety of inclement weather occurrences and similar uncontrollable events, including extreme high or low temperatures, lightning, hail, heavy rain, flooding, tornado/hurricane warnings, blizzards, ice storms, and any weather

that could create unsafe road conditions or significant driving delays. Extreme weather conditions definition from PR.681.SCO

Health-related issues means physical or mental conditions, illnesses, or symptoms that may impair an individual's ability to attend or participate in meetings, or that could pose a risk to the health and safety of others.

Family responsibilities means essential duties such as providing care, supervision, or emotional support to family members in situations involving illness, education, childcare, or other necessary family-related activities, *including activities necessary to provide financially for family*".

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Dickson,**

**THAT the Board adopt the rules of committee.**

**Carried**

Vice-Chair Millburn called a five minute recess at 8:50 pm.

***Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Dickson,***

***THAT the definition of family responsibilities be dealt with separately.***

**Carried**

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was noted:

- The definition of weather conditions is specific to weather and does not include mechanical issues related to flight delays;
- The chair may request evidence of an absence. A board member's seat is considered vacant if a member is absent from three meetings in a year;
- Grandchildren are included under family responsibilities, if they are dependents of the member; and
- Concern was raised regarding the 'grey areas' of the policy and the limitation this places on members who hold jobs and have families as it poses an equity issue for members who are less able to attend over others. In response to hypothetical scenarios proposed regarding the electronic

meeting policy, Executive Officer Mark specified that laying out the definitions in a broad context avoids strain and allows for leeway in the decision making process going forward.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT “Work and financial responsibilities necessary to provide financially for self and/or family” replace “including activities necessary to provide financially for family” as a new paragraph.

The Chair ruled the amendment out of order.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT “for self and/or one’s family” replace “for family.”

Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the Board seeks an external legal opinion on whether including “self” in the definition of family of family responsibilities.

The Chair ruled that the motion was out of order at this time and should be made when the main motion is on the table.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT “for self and/or one’s family” replace “for family.”

Defeated

*An amendment moved by Trustee Presley,*

*THAT “including activities necessary to provide financially for family” be struck.*

*Carried, friendly*

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was noted:

- With respect to employment-related scheduling conflicts, board members in favour of identifying oneself as a family, expressed the view that it is discriminatory, as it only includes those with spouses, partners and dependents. Executive Officer Mark advised that this change to the policy



would create a conflict between the policy and regulation and render the policy non-complicit with the law;

- Trustee Lyra Evans requested an external legal opinion on who is considered a dependent, furthering that one's self should be included as a dependent;
- Executive Officer Mark highlighted that this would place the section of policy outside the scope of the regulation; and

Trustee Millburn called a recess to seek clarification and the meeting was called back to order at 9:54 p.m.

- Executive Officer Mark, noted that the committee was unable to obtain outside legal counsel during the meeting but proposed to add a clause to the motion currently on the floor to require staff to seek legal opinion and report back to the Board with the decision.

*An amendment moved by Trustee Scott, seconded by Trustee Lee, THAT Policy P.018.GOV Electronic Meetings of the Board and Committees be amended to include the following definitions:*

*Disability means a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability; c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; d) a mental disorder; or e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997. The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go.*

*Weather conditions refers to a variety of inclement weather occurrences and similar uncontrollable events, including extreme high or low temperatures, lightning, hail, heavy rain, flooding, tornado/hurricane warnings, blizzards, ice storms, and any weather*

*that could create unsafe road conditions or significant driving delays. Extreme weather conditions definition from PR.681.SCO*

*Health-related issues means physical or mental conditions, illnesses, or symptoms that may impair an individual's ability to attend or participate in meetings, or that could pose a risk to the health and safety of others.*

*Family responsibilities means essential duties such as providing care, supervision, or emotional support to family members in situations involving illness, education, childcare, or other necessary family-related activities.*

Carried

Trustee Scott resumed the chair.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT a new Section 4.13 be added to Policy P.018.GOV as follows: "A trustee who has been denied entrance virtually, in absentia, be allowed to challenge the ruling of the Chair at the beginning of the meeting.

Trustee Lyra Evans withdrew the amendment.

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,**

**THAT the Board end rules of committee.**

**Carried**

**Moved by** Lyra Evans

**Seconded by** Cathryne Milburn

**THAT Policy P.018.GOV Electronic Meetings of the Board and Committees and Meeting Attendance, attached as Appendix B to Report 24-104, be approved, as amended. (Attached as Appendix A)**

For (11): 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 (11 to 0)**

12.3 Non-Consent Items

13. Matters for Discussion

13.1 Report from OPSBA Representatives (if required)

Chair Scott and Trustee Jennekens will attend the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Board of Directors meeting in Toronto on 27 and 28 September 2024.

14. Matters for Information

There were no matters for information.

15. New Business -- Information and Inquiries

Trustee Kaplan Myrth noted that several school groups in Toronto attended a field trip to Grassy Narrows River Run that was co-opted as a Middle-East Palestinian protest. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is investigating. She urged the OCDSB to take preventative action within the policy to ensure that this does not happen in the OCDSB.

Associate Director Reynolds shared that there are safeguards in place to protect staff and students. He mentioned that at no time are staff allowed to facilitate, support, or encourage participation in any protest. Individuals may choose to do so on their own time. As a professional and learning environment, the focus is maintaining a safe space and to mitigate harm. He added that the field trip procedures are currently being updated.

Executive Officer Mark provided an update in regards to the application process for the Zone 2 Trustee. The application portal closed on 20 September 2024. Eight qualified individuals have been selected. Trustees will receive sample questions for consideration in coming weeks.

Director Buffone noted that information regarding the hiring of the Arabic/Palestinian speaking coach and system-wide direction related to protests will be shared with members of the Board of Trustees by email and/or memorandum.

16. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 p.m.

Lynn Scott, Chair of the Board