



## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY REPORT

September 26, 2024  
6:00 pm  
Trustees' Committee Room  
133 Greenbank Road  
Ottawa, Ontario

Voting Members: Deepika Grover, Bronwyn Funciello, Seema Lamba, Nasrin Javanfar, Carrie-Lynn Barkley, Inini McHugh (Inuuqatigit Centre), Olga Grigoriev (Tungasuvvingat Inuit), Aisha Sherazi (Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools)

Non-Voting Members: Jacqueline Lawrence (Diversity and Equity Advisor), June Girvan, Elaine Hayles, Said Mohamed, Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Donna Dickson (Trustee)

Staff and Guests: Lynn Scott (Trustee), Lyra Evans (Trustee), Cathryn Milburn (Trustee), Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Jesse Mark (Executive Officer), Juliet Robinson (System Principal, Equity and Inclusive Initiatives), Lorna Evans (Instructional Coach, Equity and Inclusive Initiatives), Diane Pernari (General Manager, Communications & Public Relations), Oksana Kravets (Communications Coordinator), Nadia Towaj (Superintendent, Special Assignment), Kenan Omercajic (Strategic Business Analyst), Desirrea Meney (Policy Analyst), David Sachs (Jewish Federation of Ottawa), Kathy Mak (Board/Committee Coordinator)

### 1. Acknowledgement of Homelands

Acting Chair Lawrence acknowledged that this meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Homelands and acknowledged and thanked the Algonquin Nations for their stewardship of these lands since time immemorial.

### 2. Welcome/Engagement Agreements

Acting Chair Lawrence called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### 3. Community Discussion - Open Space

Acting Chair Lawrence conducted a roundtable of introductions.

#### 3.1 Visit from Director Buffone

Director Buffone acknowledged the impact on the 2SLGBTQIA+ community regarding the District's decision to withdraw from the 2024 Capital Pride Parade. He stressed the importance of inclusivity and accessibility to ensure every member of the community has a sense of belonging.

Director Buffone noted that there were a number of factors that contributed to the OCDSB's decision to withdraw from the parade, including: the change in positionality of Capital pride, the timelines of this change in position, and the implications with respect to the organization's policy for human rights. Further, the Director added that the District had considered hosting an alternate pride event, but that there was insufficient time to coordinate such an event appropriately and safely. He noted that the OCDSB will collaborate with the Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE) to review criteria for consideration for the OCDSB's participation in future events.

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

- The OCDSB will use modules, suggestions and lessons in the Anti-Hate ToolKit to help educators address global conflicts in a proactive and constructive way;
- The District has met with the President and Vice-President of Palestinian Canadian Congress (PCC), the leadership of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa (JFO) and other members of the OCDSB's employee groups to gain input on their perspectives and to hear concerns;
- The Director will work along staff to find the appropriate time and place to acknowledge publicly the hurt this situation has caused members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and highlight strategies they have brought forward for consideration to enhance the relationship with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community;
- ACE members noted the importance of having a diverse voice and transparency when making decisions. They further noted several communities were negatively impacted by the OCDSB not participating in the Capital Pride Parade. They urged the District to create a safe and inclusive space for students; and
- Acting Chair Lawrence requested that any outstanding questions be sent to her email.

#### 4. Presentations

##### 4.1 Consultations Report - Elementary Program Review (N. Towaij)

Superintendent Towajj and Strategic Business Analyst Omercajic presented the Consultations Report - Elementary Program Review.

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

- Superintendent Towajj noted that the OCDSB had collaborated with external researchers to gather information regarding the outcomes around French proficiency in University;
- ACE members urge that the OCDSB reach out to the 11 Indigenous organizations that are in the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition for additional input;
- Superintendent Towajj stressed that the model being developed will retain existing supports for students to ensure continued student success; and
- Strategic Business Analyst Omercajic noted that additional feedback from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is required and that an alternate survey may be considered.

## 5. Preparing for 2024-2025 School Year

### 5.1 Electronic Meeting and Regulatory Compliance (J. Mark)

Executive Officer Mark provided an overview on the Electronic Meeting and Regulatory Compliance report.

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

- A new provincial regulation was implemented that requires the chairs of committees and the Director or designate to attend in-person. In the event that the chair is unable to attend, the co-chair or vice chair will be required to attend in person;
- Executive Officer Mark added that the location which the Chair attends in-person must be accessible to the public, have the necessary technology and be a safe locations, and should not change over the course of the year;
- Committee meetings must be open to the public physically and electronically. According to the bylaw, public participation can be achieved through the delegation process; however, any member of the public will be able to attend and observe the meeting but will not be permitted to engage or participate in discussions;
- Executive Officer Mark clarified that the definition of what constitutes a committee is outlined in the bylaws and noted the

function and ability of committees is to provide recommendations or advice to the Board;

- It was clarified that live streaming of advisory committee meetings is done to ensure transparency and the District is governed by Freedom of Information to ensure all discussions leading to decisions made by the Board are accessible to the public;
- Executive Officer Mark noted that the implementation of Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) in email communication is to ensure sensitive information sent through formal communications are delivered to members of a large committee in a manageable way and to ensure privacy;
- Executive Officer Mark noted that he would further review the regulation regarding the live streaming of committee meetings; and
- ACE members requested that an update be provided after a review of the regulation.

6. Closing

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

At the time of adjournment, items 5.2 ACE Policy (Draft), 5.3 ACE Membership Sub-Committee and 5.4 ACE 2024-2025 Work Plan, 6.1 Superintendent Report, 6.2 ACE Report 30 May 2024, 6.3 Committee of the Whole Report, 6.4 Committee of the Whole Budget, 6.5 Advisory Committee Updates, 7 New Business and Event Announcement and 8. Upcoming Meetings, were not dealt with.

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Jacqueline Lawrence, Acting Chair