



BOARD PUBLIC MINUTES

Tuesday, November 26, 2024, 6:30 pm
Board Room
Administration Building
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

Trustees: Justine Bell (electronic communication), Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, Lynn Scott, Sharanya Sivasathiyathan (Student Trustee), Ezio De Stefano (Student Trustee), Jeffrey Zhang (Student Trustee)

Staff: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director, Academic), Randy Gerrior (Associate Director, Business Operations), Jesse Mark (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), James Proulx (Executive Officer of Technological Support Services), A.J Keene (Superintendent of Education), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Education), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Employee Services), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel), Teri Adamthwaite (General Manager, Finance), Julie Cyr (General Manager, Early Learning), Sandy Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari (General Manager of Communications & Public Relations), Michael Guilbault (Content Creator, Digital Multimedia Technician), Darren Gatley (Senior Board Coordinator), Tamara Persaud (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order -- Chair of the Board

Chair Lynn Scott called the public meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

2. Resolve into Private (In-Camera) Session

The Board resolved into Committee of the Whole (In-Camera) session at 6:35 p.m.

3. Board Reconvenes in Public Session (7:30 p.m.)

The Board reconvened into Public Session at 7:08 p.m.

4. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Chair Lynn Scott acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Homelands and thanked the Algonquin Nations for hosting the meeting on their land.

5. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were filed.

6. Report from Private (In Camera) Session

Vice-Chair Milburn reported that the Board met in camera this evening and reports and recommends as follows:

Moved by Donna Blackburn

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT staff proceed as directed in Board in Camera with respect to a financial matter.

For (12): Justine Bell (electronic communication), Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

Moved by Donna Dickson

Seconded by Cathryne Milburn

THAT staff proceed as directed in Board in Camera with respect to a human resources matter.

For (12): Justine Bell (electronic communication), Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

7. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Trustee Dickson, seconded by Trustee Nash,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

8. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

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

- The Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE) is accepting applications for membership. Those interested in supporting the OCDSB to be a more equitable institution, are encouraged to apply before 6 December 2024;
- Jessica McIntyre, an educator at Glebe Collegiate Institute, has been presented the Governor General's History Award for her excellence in teaching and her innovative contributions to Project True North. Project True North is an OCDSB initiative that sheds light on the important voices missing in Canadian History narratives; and
- 29 November 2024 is a Professional Activities (PA) Day. All OCDSB schools and EarlyON centres will be closed.

9. Briefing from the Director

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

- On 5 December 2024 from 6:00pm to 7:00pm, a virtual information session will be held to provide advice on the admission criteria, application process, and timelines for the OCDSB Secondary Gifted Program in the 2025-2026 school year;
- On 27 November 2024, an All About High school information session will be held virtually to inform students and guardians about subjects, programs and exciting aspects of the 2025-2026 school year; and
- Over the next few months, OCDSB secondary schools will be holding in person information sessions to give students and their families an opportunity to visit schools and meet some of the staff.

10. Report from the Student Trustees

Student Trustee Sharanya Sivasathiyathan provided the following information:

- On 10 October 2024, student trustees held the first virtual meeting of the Student Senate, including junior and senior senators from each high school. Discussion focused on the Elementary Program Review in relation to English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and those with special education needs;
- In early November 2024, the Student Senate met in person to identify key priorities for the 2024-2025 school year. Topics included integrating artificial intelligence into schools, student physical and mental well-being in relation to social media, development of the Student Senate newsletter, and preparing students to enter the workforce; and
- Student Trustees Sivasathiyathan and Zhang contributed to the organization of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association - l'Association des Élèves conseillers et conseillères de l'Ontario (OSTA-AECO) fall

general meeting. All three student trustees, alongside student trustees from across the province, attended the meeting in Toronto, to engage in professional development and conversation regarding matters facing students.

11. Delegations

11.1 Elyse Schipper, re ACE Committee Membership

Elyse Schipper shared her views on the proposed revisions to section 4.6 in Policy P.008.GOV Advisory Committee on Equity as recommended by the Policy Review Committee. She expressed concern over the inclusivity and fulsome diversity of the Advisory Committee of Equity membership as the policy does not explicitly highlight all demographics that are being represented on the committee or in the school community.

12. Confirmation of Board Minutes

12.1 29 October 2024

**Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth, seconded by Trustee Dickson,
THAT the Board Minutes, dated 29 October 2024, be confirmed.**

Carried

12.2 12 November 2024, Board Organizational

**Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth, seconded by Trustee Dickson,
THAT the Board Organizational Minutes, dated 12 November 2024, be confirmed.**

Carried

13. Business Arising from Board Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

14. Matters for Action

14.1 Receipt of Audit Committee Report, 25 November 2024 (oral)

Associate Director Gerrior provided an oral report on the Audit Committee Meeting held on 25 November 2024 and noted the following:

- The consolidated financial statements were prepared by the Board and audited by Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG). These financial statements were recommended for approval by the Audit Committee and Board approval is required in order to meet Ministerial requirements; and
- KPMG issued a clean, unmodified audit opinion.

Moved by Trustee Jennekens, seconded by Trustee Blackburn.

THAT the oral report of the Audit Committee meeting, dated 25 November 2024, be received.

Carried

14.1.a Approval of Draft 2023-2024 Consolidated Financial Statements

Moved by Jennifer Jennekens

Seconded by Donna Blackburn

THAT the draft 2023-2024 Consolidated Financial Statements attached as Appendix A to Report 24-126 be approved (Attached as Appendix A).

For (12): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

14.2 Receipt of Committee of the Whole Report, 5 November 2024

Moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Nash,

THAT the Committee of the Whole report, dated 5 November 2024, be received.

Carried

14.3 Receipt of Policy Review Committee Report, 14 November 2024

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Presley,

THAT the Policy Review Committee report, dated 14 November 2024, be received.

Carried

14.3.a Approval of Rescission of Policy P.084.SCO School Safety Patrols

Moved by Donna Blackburn

Seconded by Lyra Evans

THAT Policy P.084.SCO Student Safety Patrols, be rescinded.

For (12): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

14.3.b Approval of Revisions to Policy P.008.GOV, Advisory Committee on Equity

This was a non-consent item and when dealt with under item 14.4 of the agenda, the following discussion ensued:

Moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the proposed revisions to Policy P.008.GOV Advisory Committee on Equity, attached to Report 24-115 as Appendix B, be approved as amended.

An amendment moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans

THAT section 4.6 be replaced with the following: “The Committee shall aim towards member composition that represents the intersectionality, diversity and inclusiveness of the OCDSB community, prioritizing those that represent the most underserved student identities and communities. Focus on these identities and communities reinforces the Committee’s attention to educational outcomes, evidenced by recent District academic achievement data, and informed by District disciplinary action data, and District well-being data.”

During discussion, the following points were noted:

- Trustee Kaplan-Myrth proposed a sub-amendment to include “and well being data” to follow academic achievement data. The sub-amendment failed due to lack of seconder; and
- Director Buffone noted that when determining membership for the Advisory Committee on Equity, the spirit of the amendment is to look at educational outcomes holistically, considering academic achievement, wellbeing, wellness, and learning, as well as other related factors in the composition of the committee. At any given time there may be communities that need to be prioritized but this may

change over time as the school demographic landscape is constantly changing.

An amendment moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT section 4.6 be replaced with the following: “The Committee shall aim towards member composition that represents the intersectionality, diversity and inclusiveness of the OCDSB community, prioritizing those that represent the most underserved student identities and communities. Focus on these identities and communities reinforces the Committee’s attention to educational outcomes, evidenced by recent District academic achievement data, and informed by District disciplinary action data, and District well-being data.”

Carried.

An amendment moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Lyra Evans,

THAT the following section be added to section 3.4.b. as a new vi: “providing feedback on how to create equitable and inclusive education for underserved students identified in recent District research, District identity-based data, and relevant and rigorous external research.”

Carried, Friendly.

An amendment moved by Trustee Milburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans.

*THAT the definition of **2SLGBTQI+** be revised, to add an “A” to the acronym **2SLGBTQIA+***

Carried, Friendly.

Moved by Cathryne Milburn

Seconded by Lyra Evans

THAT the proposed revisions to Policy P.008.GOV Advisory Committee on Equity, attached to Report 24-115 as Appendix B, be approved, as amended (Attached as Appendix B).

For (12): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Carried (12 to 0)

14.3.b.a Supplemental Information, Memo 24-061 Revisions to P.008.Gov Advisory Committee on Equity

Memorandum 24-061 Revision to P.008.GOV Advisory Committee on Equity was provided for reference.

14.4 Non-Consent Items

14.5 Investigative Report - Code of Conduct (Suzanne Craig, Integrity Commissioner)

Chair Scott called a 5 minute recess at 8:12 p.m.

14.5.a Code of Conduct Formal Review Report - Global Findings

Integrity Commissioner, Suzanne Craig, presented the code of conduct investigation into the allegations of behavior of Trustee Blackburn.

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

- Integrity Commissioner Craig found that Trustee Blackburn's comments did not meet the definition of discrimination under the Human Rights Code as the complainant did not establish an adverse impact due to the comments. Offence/hurt feelings are not sufficient to meet the threshold. The respondent's comments fall under the ambit of protected speech under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms given that they were made in the context of a political or social debate within the board of an academic institution. Finally, there was difficulty in determining whether the Respondent's statements can be tied to specific harmful stereotypes or tropes which denigrate or dehumanize Jewish or Israeli people;
- Integrity Commissioner Craig recommended that Trustee Blackburn not be found in breach of Sections 3.5, 3.7, 3.9, 3.25 and 3.26 of the Code of Conduct. She also recommended that Trustee Blackburn be found in violation

of Section 3.18 of the Code as her behavior crossed the line of respectful comments;

- Trustee Kaplan-Myrth noted that the definition of antisemitism was sought out in order to guide the Integrity Commissioner's decision; however seeking out such information was not required in previous investigations. Integrity Commissioner Craig advised that there is no commonly understood definition of antisemitism; and
- In response to a concern expressed by some trustees regarding bias. Integrity Commissioner Craig noted that she applied the rules of the code of conduct to allegations of wrongdoing while creating accountability and transparency.

14.5.b Determination of Breach

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the Board find that Trustee Donna Blackburn has breached sections 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.9 of Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct.

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

- Trustee Lyra Evans expressed the view that Trustee Blackburn made comments containing common anti-semitic tropes and undermined the integrity of the Board. Trustee Lyra Evans emphasized that the OCDSB should uphold a higher standards of respect, civility, and politeness than those of the criminal courts. Trustees are expected to set good examples for students and staff alike;
- Trustee Milburn defined respect as "honouring oneself, and others through words and actions, supporting diversity of beliefs, and treating the world and everything in it with dignity." Trustee Milburn apologized to those in the community affected by this breach of code;
- Trustee Kaplan-Myrth expressed the opinion that the Integrity Commissioner's investigation dismissed the discriminatory comments made about the Jewish community and in doing so diminished the harm done to the Jewish Community; and
- Trustees in favour of finding Trustee Blackburn in breach of the Code of Code echoed the belief that as elected community officials, the standard for respect must remain

high and action and the words of trustees must reflect the values of the OCDSB.

Trustee Milburn assumed the chair.

Moved by Trustee Scott, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT "With due consideration of the facts set out in the Report of the Integrity Commissioner presented to the Board on 26 November 2024 be it resolved that" be added at the beginning of the motion.

Carried, friendly

Moved by Trustee Scott, seconded by Trustee Presley,

THAT each determination of breach of the code of conduct be voted on separately.

Carried, friendly

Trustee Scott resumed the Chair.

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

With due consideration of the facts set out in the Report of the Integrity Commissioner presented to the board on 26 November 2024 be it resolved that the board find that Trustee Donna Blackburn has breached section 3.5 of Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct.

For (11): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Conflict (1): Donna Blackburn

Carried (11 to 0)

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

With due consideration of the facts set out in the Report of the Integrity Commissioner presented to the board on 26 November 2024 be it resolved that the board find that Trustee Donna Blackburn has breached section 3.6 of Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct.

For (10): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Against (1): Julia Fortey

Conflict (1): Donna Blackburn

Carried (10 to 1)

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

With due consideration of the facts set out in the Report of the Integrity Commissioner presented to the board on 26 November 2024 be it resolved that the board find that Trustee Donna Blackburn has breached section 3.7 of Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct.

For (8): Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Against (2): Donna Dickson, and Jennifer Jennekens

Abstain (1): Justine Bell (electronic communication)

Conflict (1): Donna Blackburn

Carried (8 to 2)

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

With due consideration of the facts set out in the Report of the Integrity Commissioner presented to the board on 26 November 2024 be it resolved that the board find that Trustee Donna Blackburn has breached section 3.9 of Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct.

For (9): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, and Lynn Scott

Against (1): Matthew Lee

Abstain (1): Amanda Presley

Conflict (1): Donna Blackburn

Carried (9 to 1)

14.5.c Determination of Sanctions (if required)

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

Be it resolved that the sanctions for this breach by Trustee Blackburn be as follows:

1. Formal Censure
2. Mandatory anti-semitism training, the provider of which is to be determined by the Chair, and at the expense of the trustee's OCDSB professional development account.
3. Suspension from all committees until the sooner of:
 - a) the completion of the training referred to in section 2 above, or
 - b) six months from the date of this resolution

The Chair may, if necessary, appoint another trustee and interim committee positions for the duration of the sanctions.

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

- Concern was raised over the amount of time given to complete the mandatory anti-semitism training as the timeline for scheduling and registration has not been determined and may pose an issue.

Chair Scott called a 10 minute recess at 9:17 p.m.

- Trustees in favour of a restorative justice approach noted that anti-semitism training will provide information necessary for the respondent to not make these mistakes in the future;
- The provision of six months to complete the antisemitism training, set out in the by-laws and legislation is intended to incentivise the Trustee to take the sanction seriously and complete the training in a reasonable timeframe;
- Trustees not in favour of the suspension sanction, noted that in lieu of being suspended, Trustee Blackburn should issue a public apology to the Jewish community. Executive Officer Mark, noted that there is no policy in which a mandatory apology is permitted; and
- Trustee Lee requested that each section of the motion be voted on separately.

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

THAT, in accordance with Section 4.41(b) of Policy P.073.GOV, be it resolved that Trustee Blackburn be formally censured.

For (11): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Matthew Lee, Cathryne Milburn, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Conflict (1): Donna Blackburn

Carried (11 to 0)

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

THAT, in accordance with Section 4.41(b) of Policy P.073.GOV, be it resolved that Trustee Blackburn be required to complete mandatory antisemitism training, the provider of which is to be determined by the Chair, and at the expense of the trustee's professional development account.

For (8): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, Cathryne Milburn, and Amanda Presley

Against (3): Matthew Lee, Suzanne Nash, and Lynn Scott

Conflict (1): Donna Blackburn

Carried (8 to 3)

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Nili Kaplan-Myrth

Be it resolved that the sanctions for this breach be as follows:

3. Suspension from all committees until the sooner of:

a. the completion of the training referred to in section 2 above, or

b. six months from the date of this resolution

The Chair may, if necessary, appoint another trustee and interim committee positions for the duration of the sanctions.

For (4): Justine Bell (electronic communication) , Lyra Evans, Nili Kaplan-Myrth, and Cathryne Milburn

Against (7): Donna Dickson, Julia Fortey, Jennifer Jennekens, Matthew Lee, Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley, and Lynn Scott

Conflict (1): Donna Blackburn

Defeated (4 to 7)

15. Matters for Discussion

15.1 Update on Financial Situation (Oral)

Chair Scott called a 5 minute recess at 9:53 p.m.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Dickson.

THAT the Update on Financial Situation (Oral) be deferred to the 28 January 2025, Board meeting.

Defeated

Associate Director Gerrior provided an update on compliance results and the current financial position of the Board.

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

- For the 2023-2024 school year, the Board approved a balanced budget; however the year-end result was a \$12.1 million deficit;
- The impact of Bill 124 was approximately \$19 million in underfunding for the District. Prior to the implementation of Bill 124 the District was on track to generate a surplus. Areas of concern due to underfunding are replacement costs and portable moves. Inflationary pressures continue in the areas of school operations and maintenance;
- An increase in per pupil allocation revenue has been received. Increases have also been received for special education, language, teacher qualifications, transportation and Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF);
- Student enrolment is expected to fluctuate over the next few years;
- Trustees were encouraged to advocate for funding increases for replacement costs and special education;

- The Ministry of Education will expect a recovery plan that includes plans for a surplus budget and rebuilding of financial reserves; and
- Director Buffone expressed appreciation to all school administrators, system leaders, principals and vice principals, for the significant efforts made throughout the 2023-2024 school year to reconcile the budgetary situation.

15.2 Report from OSTA Representatives (if required)

Trustee Lee shared that Stacey Kay has accepted the position of General Manager and Chief Administrative Officer with the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) effective 16 December 2024.

Trustee Presley suggested that OSTA should undertake a campaign to promote safe driving practices around school buses.

15.3 Report from OPSBA Representatives (if required)

Trustee Jennekens shared that she and Chair Scott will be attending the OBSPA Board of Directors meeting on 30 November 2024.

16. Board Work Plan

The Board Work Plan was provided for information.

17. New Business -- Information and Inquiries

There was no new business.

18. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

Lynn Scott, Chair of the Board