



ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY REPORT

April 24, 2025

6:00 pm

**Trustees' Committee Room
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario**

Voting Members: Mohammad Zakir Houssain Khan, Menasheh Speevak-Sladowski, Tabassum Khan, Ray Hincke, Tejas Srinivas, Jason Glover, Christine Moran, Ali Shaker, David Sachs (Jewish Federation of Ottawa), Amy Awad (Muslim Association of Canada), Inini McHugh (Inuuqatigit Centre), Soufiane Koussih (Palestinian Canadian Congress), Aisha Sherazi (Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools)

Non-Voting Members: Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Donna Dickson (Trustee), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Education), Lynn Scott (Trustee)

Staff and Guests: Douglas Kendall (Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools), Hibagh Ahmed (Muslim Association of Canada), Nili Kaplan-Myrth (Trustee), Jesse Mark (General Counsel, Governance & Legal Services), Darren Gatley (General Manager, Governance Services), Katherine Magner (General Manager of Program Services), Sait Atas (Research Officer), Kathy Mak (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Acknowledgement of Algonquin Homelands

Chair Moran called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Chair Moran acknowledged that the meeting is being held on the unceded, unsurrendered Homelands of the Anishinaabeg Algonquin Nation whose presence in Canada reaches back to time immemorial.

She extended deep gratitude and sought to support and affirm their rights as the land's stewards and keepers.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by David Sachs,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Moved by Menasheh Speevak-Sladowski,

THAT a new discussion item regarding the establishment of a subcommittee relating to the District's policies, be added to the agenda. Menasheh Speevak-Sladowki noted the importance of Truth and Reconciliation actions and of the Indigenous voice.

In response to a request from Tejas Srinivas that an additional ACE meeting be scheduled, staff noted that her request to add an additional meeting would have to be brought forward following the vote on the current amendment to the approval of the agenda.

Chair Glover noted that the suggested item could be added under item 9, New Business.

Moved by Menasheh Speevak-Sladowski,

THAT a new discussion item regarding the establishment of a subcommittee relating to the District's policies, be added to the agenda, under item 9, New Business and Event Announcements.

Carried

Moved by Soufiane Koussih,

THAT item 7.1 Committee of the Whole Report be moved after item 7.4 Superintendent's Report in the agenda.

Carried

Moved by David Sachs,

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

Carried

3. Approval of ACE Report, 24 February 2025

Moved by David Sachs,

THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity Report of 24 February 2025, be received.

Carried

4. Chair's Remarks

There were no Chair's Remarks.

5. Presentation and Discussion

5.1 Student Learning Report Part 1 (K. Magner & S. Atas)

General Manager Magner and Research Officer Atas presented part 1 of the Student Learning Report.

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

- Students attending Ottawa-Carleton Virtual (OCV) schools have been included in the District's survey and data collection initiatives; however, they are not disaggregated by school level;
- It was noted that the District does not analyze statistical significance for literacy and mathematical data on a descriptive level;
- The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) test is used to identify student progress and is more reliable than report cards when examining trends over time;
- The District collaborates with the Learning Support Services (LSS) department to ensure equity, well-being, and mental health practices are embedded throughout the system, with strong literacy and math practices in instructional coaching and in professional development (PD);
- Staff will analyze school data to prioritize deploying instructional coaches;
- General Manager Magner noted that additional data for the student learning report was provided at the 4 February 2025 Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting;
- The understanding of student strengths, needs and interest are embedded into PD for educators and instructional coaches;
- The District uses a number of tools in addition to EQAO to gather student data and monitor progress on culturally responsive strategies, including the use of report cards, data from the school climate survey, and perceptual data on student confidence;
- Trustee Kaplan-Myrth suggested that ACE members consider disproportionalities, students with special needs, Indigenous students and low socioeconomic students in the student learning data and noted the importance of improving the statistics;
- The District monitors multilingual learners through disaggregated data based on a tool: 'Step to English proficiency' (STEP) continuum, and data indicates that English as second language (ESL) students often require additional support;
- ACE members expressed concern regarding the continuation of support from STEP through the entirety of the student's time in the District. General Manager Magner noted that literacy coaches and

multilingual coaches will be merged in the 2025-2026 school year to ensure all literacy coaches will be supporting multilingual learners; and

- Chair Glover noted that the presentation slides will be distributed to ACE members through email.

6. Elementary Program Review (EPR) Update

Superintendent Farrish provided an update on the elementary program review (EPR) and noted the following information:

- The District held three Special Board Meetings focused on delegations to help trustees make an informed decision and hear the voices of the community;
- The EPR has been revised resulting in changes to boundaries, grade configuration and programs offered in schools;
- To accommodate input and feedback with respect to grade configuration, the revised EPR proposal will offer dual track programs to the majority of school sites, with a small number of schools remaining English with Core French or French Immersion with Enhanced English only;
- Concerns were raised through the consultation activities and forums noting that grade configurations are a barrier to keeping some families together as students may attend multiple schools with different grade configurations. Staff was tasked to provide a solution which resulted in the revised EPR proposal where not all school sites are able to offer French Immersion (FI) programming;
- Inini McHugh noted the involvement of the Indigenous scholar in the EPR and suggested delaying the vote on the EPR proposal until the scholar has completed their work;
- Trustee Kaplan-Myrth expressed concern noting that 4 out of 5 schools in low socioeconomic neighbourhoods will not have the FI program offered; and
- Trustee Scott noted that the uneven distribution of students across the system impacted the EPR model.

7. Reports

7.1 Committee of the Whole, Budget (Inini McHugh)

Inini McHugh provided an overview of the COW Budget meeting and noted the following:

- The District will be looking to decrease the total number of educational assistant (EA) positions;

- Currently there are 58 EAs supporting Indigenous students. Inini McHugh expressed concern regarding the impact on student support that will be the result of decreasing EA positions; and
- Trustee Scott clarified the vote regarding the decrease in staffing will focus on positions that require a teaching certificate. A number of EA, graduation coaches and other staff will not be considered as they are not required to have a teaching certificate.

7.2 Advisory Committee Updates (Tejas Srinivas)

Tejas Srinivas provided an overview of the Policy Review Committee from 10 April 2025 and noted the following:

- An amendment to include an appeal to a committee comprising a multidisciplinary review panel, trustee and Director or designate was defeated;
- The proposed merger of learning resources policies, the rescission of P 082 HR - Selection, Training, Placement and Appraisal of Staff for the Positions of Principal and Vice-Principal, and the Approval of Revisions to P 128 GOV - Privacy - MFIPPA and Recission of P 096 SCO - Confidential Communication Between Students and Staff, were approved;
- Tejas Srinivas expressed concern regarding the scheduling of ACE meetings as there may not always be a meeting prior to the Board or Policy Review Committee. General Counsel Mark clarified that the District is currently developing a framework to ensure the flow of information occurs chronologically; and
- Trustee Scott noted that ACE members can raise issues to the Board by putting forward a motion that will be recorded in minutes.

7.3 Superintendent's Report

There was no Superintendent's Report provided.

7.4 Committee of the Whole Report (Menasheh Speevak-Sladowski)

Refer to the restricted minutes dated 24 April 2025 for a record of the discussion.

8. Discussion

8.1 ACE Representation on Committees

This item was deferred to the 29 May 2025 ACE meeting.

9. New Business and Event Announcements

This item was deferred to the 29 May 2025 ACE meeting.

10. Upcoming Meeting Dates

The upcoming ACE meeting dates were provided for information.

11. Closing

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 p.m.

Jason Glover and Chris Moran, Co-Chairs