



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT

Thursday, February 21, 2019, 6:00 pm
Trustees' Lounge
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

Attendees Present	Monique Manatch, Sytukie Joamie, Jo VanHooser, Raiglee Alorut, Sylvie Lajoie, Maija Robillard, Scarlett Diamantopoulos, Jesse Kavanaugh, and Jordyn Hendricks.
Staff Present	Superintendent Dorothy Baker, Executive Officer Michèle Giroux, Chief Financial Officer Mike Carson, Vice-Principal Jody Alexander, Instructional Coaches Nancy Henry and Kris Meawasige, Educational Assistant Lili Miller, and Committee Coordinator Amanda Rock.
Non-Voting Representatives Present	Trustee Wendy Hough.

1. Opening

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m.

Monique Manatch acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on unceded Algonquin territory and thanked the Algonquin Nation for hosting the meeting on their land.

Monique Manatch shared the Algonquin Creation story. The story spoke to how the Creator consulted with every member of creation to bring humans into existence. Each member put a sacred gift in the fire such as patience, love, and family. A man and a woman stepped out of the fire. The woman and the man thanked every creature for what they had given to them. Ms. Manatch explained that it is the IEAC's responsibility to bring out gifts and positive attributes in others. As an advisory council it is important to have insight and see gifts in the younger generation.

Monique said a prayer of thanks.

2. Approval of the 17 January 2019 IEAC Minutes

Sytukie Joamie mentioned that there was a long-list of First Nations (FN) people who had a desire to be a parent/agency representative on the Council. He requested clarification with regard to how the FN representatives were determined. Superintendent Baker reminded the IEAC that a consensus was reached that anyone who is a part of the circle at meetings is part of the decision-making. Instructional Coach Henry added that the FN representatives were confirmed at the 17 January 2019 meeting.

The 17 January 2019 IEAC report was approved with minor amendments to Jordyn Hendricks comment on page three of the minutes and Albert Dumont's comments about Ovide Mecredi.

3. Identity Based Data

3.1 Supplemental Information: Report 19-019 Identity-Based Data

Executive Officer Giroux advised that the Report 19-019 provides information on the identity-based data collection project at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB).

She highlighted the following regarding the collection of identity-based data from the Indigenous community:

- The collection of identity-based data is human rights focused;
- The collection of identity-based data helps to inform the District's work to build capacity in supporting student learning and student needs;
- The *Anti-Racism Act* gives legislative authority for the data collection;
- The Ontario Standards for Race-Based Data Collection will govern the District's work;
- There is an increase in school districts conducting identity-based data collection;
- The Ontario Standards for Race-Based Data Collection require compliance from all Ontario agencies; and
- The *Act* focuses on anti-black racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and the experiences of the Indigenous community.

Executive Officer Giroux noted that patterns of student achievement and outcomes from the Indigenous community will be reviewed relative to students on the whole. Topics such as students' program selection, disciplinary issues, and credit accumulation are examples of possible areas of focus. She explained that understanding intersectionalities of certain groups is important to inform the District's work on an on-going basis.

Executive Officer Giroux identified the following areas that visible minority students may be over represented:

- Suspensions;
- Applied stream courses; and
- The high school dropout rate.

Executive Officer Giroux advised that the next steps in the identity-based data collection include the following:

- The qualitative data collection (focus groups) during the spring 2019; and
- The data collection in the fall 2019.

Qualitative data collection will focus on conversations with the community regarding lived experiences and how data collection can address some of the Indigenous community's issues. The data collection in the fall will be a survey sent to students and parents. The questions have not been finalized but may be similar to the questions asked in the 2011 Student Survey.

The IEAC noted their concerns and ideas as follows:

- The Indigenous community does not always trust non-Indigenous people with the collection of their personal information given the historical impact of research on Indigenous people;
- The methodology being used to conduct this research needs to be clear;
- The way that surveys are conducted in some communities may not work for the Indigenous community;
- There are a significant number of First Nations, Métis, and Indigenous students dropping out of high school;
- Different Indigenous communities may have varying opinions on what is accepted protocol for conducting this type of research;
- Some Indigenous families only feel comfortable speaking with an Indigenous worker/respected community member;
- There needs to be an acknowledgement from the District that racism does occur;
- Cultural sensitivity and expertise is needed for the focus group sessions;
- Collaboration with the community is crucial to drafting appropriate questions;
- Relationship building between the District and the Indigenous community may be difficult due to time constraints;
- The categorization of the different Indigenous people in a survey format may be challenging;
- The District needs to respect the First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP);
- Identity questions must allow Indigenous people to identify more specifically and with cross-sectionality taken into consideration;

- The OCDSB should share the data they collect with the Indigenous community as they should have ownership over the research; and
- There needs to be reciprocity between the OCDSB and the Indigenous community.

Student representative Jordyn Hendricks noted that some students do not feel comfortable speaking in a classroom setting. She expressed concern over how they will speak about racism in a focus group. It is important for the community to know where the solutions are being implemented because they are baring emotional wounds and lived experiences with no insight in to what change will happen.

In response to the IEAC's queries, Executive Officer Giroux and Superintendent Baker provided the following information:

- The logistics and locations of the focus groups have not been finalized;
- The focus groups will not be public town hall meetings;
- The District would welcome feedback from the IEAC regarding which locations may be safe spaces to hold focus group sessions;
- The Ontario Standards for Race-Based Data Collection do not replace the self-identification process;
- The Children's Aid Society (CAS) is an identified partner with the District to build capacity with regard to this project;
- The province will be creating sample questions for many school boards to use as a template for their own identity-based data collection;
- The District is open to feedback from the IEAC on how Indigenous students and their families may express their identities;
- The data collection survey will be available online;
- In the past, students in grade 7-12 have answered the student survey while it was completed by the parents of students in kindergarten to grade 6;
- Training plans for the District's leaders and staff such as guidance counsellors, psychologists, and social workers are part of the District's preparation to conduct the data collection;
- There is specificity and an order that the data collection questions must follow;
- The ongoing timing and frequency of the identity-based data collection has not yet been established;
- The Ontario Standards for Race-Based Data Collection advise that data should be collected at the first point of contact (registration);
- The collection of data may need to be collected separately from students and parents and as a group;
- Building relationships with the community through the OCDSB's Indigenous team and the IEAC are important to gain the community's trust;

- The identity-based data collection project is an OCDSB project;
- The data collection will be confidential;
- The data sets will be anonymous;
- Other school boards must follow the Ontario Standards for Race-Based Collection when conducting similar work;
- Districts in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) have been conducting this research and working with their respective communities for many years; and
- In 2017, The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) and the City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) drafted the Anti-Black Racism Forum Report that had four recommendations in the following areas: social services (health), education and employment, policing and justice, and media representation.

Superintendent Baker stressed that the identity-based data collection project will inform the District's work to improve student outcomes. She added that the District will strive to conduct the project in a respectful manner.

Executive Officer Giroux agreed to consult with the Research, Evaluation, and Analytics Department (READ) as well as legal counsel to determine if the identity-based data collection adheres to the First Nations Principles of OCAP. She thanked the IEAC for their feedback.

Trustee Hough noted that the goal of the identity-based data collection is to inform practice and make changes at the classroom level. The District cannot know what they need to improve until they know who the students are in their classrooms. She added that once students are identified their needs can be met more appropriately. The data collection is only one portion of the project.

4. Standing Recommendations

4.1 Respectful language and communication

This item was not discussed and will be dealt with at a later date.

4.2 Safe spaces for Indigenous students in all four areas of Ottawa

Vice-Principal Alexander shared that she met with the Indigenous Education Learning Team to discuss creating more safe spaces for Indigenous students within the District.

Sytukie Joamie noted that Gloucester High School is fortunate to have a lodge in their school.

Lili Miller explained her passion for allowing students to smudge in elementary and secondary schools. She queried whether future safe spaces could allow for students to smudge. She explained that smudging can be healing for students.

Vice-Principal Alexander responded by stating that several Districts in the province are currently discussing smudge protocols. She added that this topic can be discussed further at a future meeting with facilities management.

Mr. Joamie noted that some Inuit students do not smudge because their parents do not allow them to participate in smudging.

4.3 Leverage data from community partners

Superintendent Baker explained that the District will continue to work with Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI), the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, and the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre (OICC) to collaborate on data collection.

4.4 Leverage technology to connect Indigenous youth

Vice-Principal Alexander recalled that streaming into The Lodge at Gloucester High School is an idea that will be explored for students to have access to events.

4.5 Conduct supported student-led presentations at schools across the District

Instructional Coach Henry suggested that the week after March Break may be a suitable time to have a face-to-face discussion with students about student-led Indigenous presentations in schools across the District. Vice-Principal Alexander added that there was a short list of students who expressed interest in conducting these presentations.

Student representative Jordyn Hendricks noted that there were presentations/workshops scheduled earlier in February at Gloucester High School; however, they were cancelled due to inclement weather.

Instructional Coach Henry explained that the logistics, format, content, and audience of these presentations will be discussed in detail to ensure that the OCDSB Indigenous education team is fully supporting its students.

Student representative Jordyn Hendricks suggested 22 March 2019 in The Lodge at Gloucester High School as a meeting date and location to discuss the student-led presentations in detail. She noted that time is of the essence for Indigenous students to be positively impacted by these presentations.

Jesse Kavanaugh told a story about being reprimanded for walking in the hall while the national anthem was being played during the morning assembly. She expressed concern for the way this makes Indigenous students feel.

Mr. Joamie suggested that students who are conducting the presentations should meet with their Indigenous peers within the schools prior to presenting to their entire student body.

4.6 Intentional hiring practices to ensure Indigenous representation

This item was not discussed and will be dealt with at a later date.

5. Board Action Plan Update

Superintendent Baker and Vice-Principal Alexander provided a hard copy of the Board Action Plan on Indigenous Education. They requested that the IEAC review the document and provide feedback by email or phone call. They noted that this document is mandated by the Ministry of Education and is an interim report.

Vice Principal Alexander reminded the IEAC that the following are the areas of focus:

- *Using data to support student achievement;*
- *Supporting students;*
- *Supporting educators; and*
- *Community engagement.*

Superintendent Baker added that the Board Action Plan is a working document with a set budget. She explained that the IEAC's standing recommendations should be incorporated into the Board Action Plan going forward.

6. Closing Prayer

Vice-Principal Alexander advised that there is no IEAC meeting in the month of March. The next IEAC meeting is 18 April 2019.

Sytukie Joamie stressed that the IEAC members and meeting participants should not be engaging with their electronic devices during the meeting. He explained that it is disrespectful to all in the circle.

Jo VanHooser reminded the students that the work that they are doing now will have an impact on future generations.

Ms. Manatch said a closing prayer and thanked the creator for discussing the issues to educate and support younger generations.

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.