



## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY

**March 28, 2019**

**6:00 pm**

**Trustees' Committee Room**

**133 Greenbank Road**

**Ottawa, Ontario**

- Members:** Elaine Hayles (Community Representative), Harvey Brown (Community Representative), Jane Fjeld (Youth Services Bureau), Raigelee Alorut (Tungasuvvingat Inuit), Lisa Montroy (Family Services Ottawa), Ruth Sword (Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools)
- Non-Voting Members:** Tim Stanley (University of Ottawa), Rob Campbell (Trustee), Jacqueline Lawrence (Equity and Diversity Coordinator)
- Staff and Guests:** Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee), Chris Ellis (Trustee), Sonia Nadon-Campbell (Special Education Advisory Committee), Sue Rice (Inclusive Safe and Caring Instructional Coach), David Wildman (Elementary Teacher's Federation of Ontario), Tsala Mosimakoko (Research Officer), Jean Goulet (Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools), Johanna Jackson Kelly (Instructional Coach), June Girvan (J'Nikira Dinqinesh Education Centre), Susan MacDonald (Superintendent of Instruction), David Sutton (OCDSB), Nicole Guthrie (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Welcome/Call to Order

Chair Hayles called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Diversity and Equity Coordinator Lawrence acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Territory and thanked the Algonquin Nations for hosting the meeting on their land.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Jane Fjeld,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Diversity and Equity Coordinator Lawrence suggested that item 5.2 become item 5.1.

**Moved by Jane Fjeld,**

**THAT the agenda be approved as amended.**

**Carried**

3. Community Voice (delegations)

There were no delegations.

4. Review of Advisory Committee on Equity Reports

4.1 Approval of the ACE Report - 25 October 2018

**Moved by Elaine Hayles,**

**THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity report dated 25 October 2018 be received.**

**Carried**

4.2 Approval of the ACE Report - 29 November 2018

**Moved by Elaine Hayles,**

**THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity report dated 29 November 2018 be received.**

**Carried**

4.3 Review of the Long Range Agenda

The long range agenda was provided for information.

4.4 Motion/Action Tracking Report, Business Arising

The Motion/Action Tracking Report was provided for information.

5. Action/Discussion/Information Items

5.1 2019-2020 Budget Overview (M. Carson, ext. 8881)

Manager of Financial Services, Kevin Gardner, provided the committee with an update on the 2019-2020 Budget.

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

- An average daily enrollment (ADE) increase of 489 students has increased the Grants for Student Needs (GSNs) revenues for 2018-2019;
- Ten elementary teaching positions were added in 2018-2019;
- Growth at the secondary level in 2018-2019 was managed within the existing staff complement;
- The compensation differential for new teachers is projected to provide a savings of \$9.1 million in 2018-2019;

- Staff anticipate a surplus of \$2.8 million at the end of the 2018-2019 school year based on the revised estimates;
- Significant pressures to the 2019-2020 Budget include inflationary costs, new infrastructure to replace outdated equipment, professional development and staff replacement costs;
- Significant risks to the 2019-2020 Budget include Ministry funding reductions, the expiry of collective agreements, and the expiry of the Local Priorities Funding (LPF) which created numerous additional positions;
- Enrollment growth is expected to continue and staff anticipate over 1000 new students;
- The Board approved academic staffing on 26 March 2019. While not a part of the regular budget process, it represents \$550 million and covers the mandated staffing. Academic staffing must be approved by the end of March annually in order to meet contractual obligations to ensure staff are placed for the following school year;
- The Ministry has announced significant changes to class sizes at the secondary level which will impact funding;
- In 2018-2019 the District made the following equity investments:
  - \$280,000 was distributed to Resource Allocation Index based on Socioeconomics (RAISE) identified schools to support the unique needs of the school
  - An Indigenous support staff was added
  - Increased support to drug counselling
  - A \$60,000 investment to the RAISE high schools to help support homework programming and community health initiatives
  - A \$40,000 investment in Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs)
  - Additional support for the Breakfast Program
  - Increased translation services
- An update on the status of the GSNs will be provided at the 16 April 2019 Committee of the Whole Budget meeting.

Ms. Girvan commented on the concerns raised by students during the Black student forum on 25 March 2019. In particular, she noted that there were few Black males in the Mental Health and Self Care session. Black young women are very concerned about their male peers. Ms. Girvan noted that the school to prison pipeline will continue if Black male youth cannot access the mental health and wellness support they need. She stressed the importance of preventative work in the schools and queried whether or not the budget will address these vulnerable youth. She expressed the view that Black students are not receiving the financial support they need.

Manager Gardner advised that mental health is not his area of expertise. He noted that in 2018-2019 the funding for mental health increased and would benefit all students with needs.

Ms. Girvan expressed the view that the issue is a human rights violation and the issue is ongoing and she hoped the District would begin to address the matter within the budget.

Ms. Alorut recommended that Indigenous students also be included.

Moved by Jane Fjeld,

THAT the Board explore funding to support mental health through an equity lens especially for students who self identify as First Nations, Inuit and Metis and for male students of African descent.

In introducing the motion Ms. Fjeld advised that the needs of racialized students have been identified as a priority within the Ministry of Health.

Ms. Girvan stressed the importance of emergency interventions for the vulnerable populations noted in the recommendation. She added that the Federal Government has recently announced funding for mental health initiatives and that the District could explore possible partnerships.

Ms. Alorut expressed the view that Inuit history must be taught and must include an aspect of mental health. She stressed the importance of learning the Inuit language and culture. The Inuit population is growing in the City of Ottawa and students need to be more aware of the issues facing Inuit students, citing the high rate of suicide among youth in Nunavut.

Equity and Diversity Coordinator Lawrence suggested that Vice-Principal for Indigenous Education, Jody Alexander, or a member of her team attend a future meeting of ACE to discuss Indigenous student learning.

Dr. Stanley noted that Ottawa is one of the largest Inuit centres in the south and suggested that further to the recommendation the District explore ways of developing services that are sensitive to the specific needs of the Inuit community of Ottawa. Manager Gardner noted that the District works with and provides funds to Ottawa Inuit Childrens Centre.

Mr. Sutton suggested that through the budget process, ACE recommend the inclusion of sweated amounts of funding and resources allocated specifically to equity and social justice.

Mr. Brown queried how the budget relates to the strategic plan and how the budget aids in the goal of student achievement, especially as it relates to equity. Manager Gardner noted that the District invests in each of the five pillars, but it would be difficult to provide a dollar amount utilized specifically for equity noting that funding is spread out across multiple departments and programs to support student outcomes and many investments support multiple pillars. Manager Gardner added that

measuring the success of the strategic plan has been identified as a concern and will be addressed in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan process.

Superintendent MacDonald noted that measurement reports do relate to the Strategic Plan as does the Director's Work Plan. Senior staff is contributing to the development of the draft 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. She noted that a key element of the discussions have focused on measurements and accountability to ensure the work envisioned through the strategic plan is realized.

Mr. Brown expressed the view that it is difficult to see how equity-based goals are being achieved within the budget.

**Moved by Jane Fjeld,**

**THAT the Board explore funding to support mental health through an equity lens especially for students who self identify as First Nations, Inuit and Metis and for male students of African descent.**

**Carried**

**5.2 Report 19-019, Identity Based Data Collection (M. Giroux, ext. 8310)**

Your Committee had before it Report 19-019 providing an overview of the plan for the collection and reporting of identity-based data. Joan Oracheski, Manager of the Research, Evaluation & Analytics Division and Research Officer, Tsala Mosimakoko provided the members with an update on the progress of identity based data collection.

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

- In 2017, the Province enacted the Anti-Racism Act. The Act seeks to eliminate systemic racism and advance racial equity supports in the province;
- The Act identifies students in four groups (Indigenous, Black, Jewish and Islamic) who have historically experienced systemic bias. The District has broadened the approach and the second phase of data collection will also include LGBTQQ+, South East Asian, socio-economically disadvantaged, disabled under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and newcomers;
- Data standards were provided to school boards and prescribe specific processes for collection and reporting;
- The Ontario Education Equity Action Plan outlines the provincial framework for identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices and systemic barriers and bias from Ontario schools and classrooms;
- The Equity Action Plan has four main areas of focus:
  - School and Classroom Practices;
  - Leadership, Governance and Human Resource Practices;

- Data Collection, Integration and Reporting;
- Organizational Culture Change
- The work of Identity Based Data Collection is being undertaken by a project team comprised of staff from several departments including Curriculum Services, READ, Communications and Business and Learning Technology (B&LT). The team includes the Diversity and Equity Coordinator and the Vice Principal of Indigenous Education. The team was established to oversee the project;
- Although the District received approval for the grant proposal, the funding from the Ministry was not released until December 2018 causing a delay in the project. Background work has been undertaken in the interim. The Ministry has approved a funding extension until the end of November 2019 which will permit the data collection planned for the fall of 2019;
- The District has communicated with the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) to provide assistance with outreach to community organizations to facilitate and provide input into the focus group process;
- The focus groups, tentatively scheduled for May, will involve parents of students from kindergarten to grade six and students from grades seven through twelve. The intent of the focus group is to gather the range of experiences in the school system in order to highlight the systemic barriers and bias encountered as well as input into engaging specific communities during the collection of information phase;
- The District currently reports on a range of student data including achievement and suspension rates as well as reporting on the five groups identified in the current strategic plan. The current reporting structure will need to be aligned with the data gathered in the identity based data collection process. The calculations within the Ministry standards are specific and the READ team aims to include these into other reports;
- Trustee Ellis sought clarification on the funding extension, Manager Orcheski noted that the original proposal requested \$146,000 and received approval for \$103,000 in December. A revised proposal granted the District a total of \$151,000 for the project. A majority of the funding will be used for additional staff. She added that additional funds may be available to allow OLIP to acquire research and facilitation services using community partners;
- In response to a query from Trustee Ellis, Manager Orcheski responded that the project is funded through a Ministry transfer payment agreement which is in addition to the regular budget. The additional staff is contracted until the end of November. She could not comment on whether or not there was a request for additional project staffing in the 2019-2020 budget. She added that she is hopeful the

Ministry of Education's Education Equity Secretariat will add a second round of funding to support the ongoing work of analyses;

- Dr. Stanley queried the focus on the Southeast Asian community, Manager Orcheski noted that, at the provincial level, other Districts had identified this group as warranting further investigation. As District staff reviewed both Statistics Canada census data and data collected during the 2011 OCDSB Student Survey, the proportion of the population that self-identified as Southeast Asian was not as substantive as some other groups, and therefore the decision to include Southeast Asian as a separate group could not be justified. Manager Orcheski also noted that it is important to remember that there is intersectionality across each of the eight groups that will be invited to share their experiences, and that those who identify as Southeast Asian or in other ways may still have an opportunity to share their experiences through the focus group discussion if they also identify as one of the eight groups selected. Opportunity will also be afforded for all stakeholders to participate in the voluntary collection of identity-based data in the fall of 2019;
- Dr. Stanley queried whether or not more specific questions regarding Indigenous heritage would be added to validate results;
- The District works with a diverse range of community organizations and intends to engage representatives from these community partnerships. Within the focus groups, the District anticipates that parents and students will share experiences that point to systemic barriers and bias;
- The data standards explicitly identify data categories but boards can add their own questions;
- The District intends to undertake both a qualitative and quantitative approach. The information gathered from the focus groups will complement the quantitative data;
- Trustee Campbell requested the Ministry data standards be shared with ACE and the public;
- A provincial working group was created and the group has provided guidance and recommendations to the Ministry;
- While the Act and the standards provide the District with the authority to collect the data, provincial organizations are not mandated to collect until May of 2023 under the current standard. Manager Orcheski expressed the view that there may be an opportunity for a change to the standards but she could not be certain;
- Trustee Campbell commented that he is anxious to see the outcomes of the studies. He queried whether or not Board investment would speed up the process. Manager Orcheski noted that the Ministry funding is available until the end of November 2019 which coincides with the launch of the survey. The District is committed to reporting the

results of the survey utilizing the current complement of staff in the Annual Student Achievement (ASAR) in the fall of 2020;

- Ms. Nadon-Campbell expressed the view that requiring validation of Indigenous ancestry would be unwise. She added that those who self-identify Indigenous do so from a place of pride that stems from an unkind history;
- Ms. Mosimakoko noted that the data standard speaks to the self-identification of Indigenous and further discussion with the community during the focus group sessions is required in order to better understand and manage the issue;
- Ms. Alorut queried the matter of consent. Manager Oracheski noted that a passive consent process has been used by the District in the past which allowed parents to choose whether or not their child would participate. School boards who have already undertaken the data collection have used both active and passive consent. The District has not made a decision on which element of consent it will use and plans to liaise with the community on the subject;
- Chair Hayles stressed the importance of communication regarding data collection to ensure trust and participation. She noted it will be important that communities understand what the data collection is for and how it will be used. Manager Oracheski noted that the purpose of the data collection is to identify barriers and systemic bias in the system for the purpose of eliminating it. Owing to challenges with trust in the past, the District has partnered with OLIP to leverage their established networks to support the work;
- Chair Hayles expressed the view that many members of the Black community are not newcomers. Equity and Diversity Coordinator Lawrence noted that OLIP has a variety of partnerships with non-newcomer communities and that their reach into the Black community and others identified by the project is wide;
- In response to a query from Chair Hayles regarding the diversity of the project team, Manager Oracheski noted that the project team is comprised of staff. Many on the project teams have connections to partner organizations in the community. The team guides the process;
- The District has not yet identified the focus group participants and wants to ensure a range of experience is represented. Input from ACE members on groups that should be included in the focus groups may be forwarded to Manager Oracheski;
- Ms. Girvan expressed the view that the students involved in the Black Student Forum held on 25 March 2019 be invited to participate in the focus groups;
- Ms. Girvan queried how the District will deal with students with multiple identities, Manager Oracheski commented that there is a significant level of complexity and anticipates many focus group participants may



be representative of many groups. She added that the data collection process will afford a better opportunity to identify intersectionalities;

- In response to a query from Mr. Sutton, Manager Oracheski noted that the directive for the focus groups and the data collection is primarily focused on the student. She added that a natural progression of the work will be to evolve to staff, however, the current funding is provided for the collection of student-related data;
- The project team is finalizing specific timelines and details. It is anticipated that the qualitative phase will be completed before the end of June 2019 to ensure the data collection can begin in November 2019;
- Trustee Blackburn commented on the collection of data from the LGBTQ++ community and the intersectionality of LGBTQ++ with other identified groups. She expressed interest in the results of the focus groups and whether or not there is a general sense of homophobia and transphobia in the community. She noted that often, unlike other identified groups, school is a safe space for LGBTQ++ students;
- The District is also interested in gathering positive stories to help foster those ideas and lessons for use with other schools and students; and
- Updates on identity based data collection can be provided to ACE through the department update.

### 5.3 Equity Resources

Equity and Diversity Coordinator Lawrence noted that details on the equity resources by a particular group (e.g. LGBTQ++, Indigenous, Black, etc.) will be provided at a future meeting.

### 5.4 ACE Membership Update

Diversity Coordinator Lawrence advised that she was working with the Communications department on the membership campaign. She will provide members with the invitation when complete and encouraged them to share the invitation with their communities.

Ms. Fjeld volunteered to sit on the membership sub-committee.

Mr. Brown volunteered to sit on the membership sub-committee as a community representative.

### 5.5 ACE Interim Chair and COW Representative

Chair Hayles and Harvey Brown agreed to be the Committee of the Whole representative and alternate respectively.

Trustee Ellis stressed the importance of finalizing the ACE membership.

Chair Hayles expressed the view that the issue with committee membership is the meeting location, noting that the administration building

at 133 Greenbank Road is a challenge to access. She suggested that potential members may be wary to apply as a result. She expressed the view that ACE meetings should be in a more central location and requested it be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Trustee Scott agreed to address the matter of meeting location with the Director of Education.

Chair Hayles agreed to Chair the meetings for the balance of the year.

## 6. Department Update

Superintendent MacDonald advised of the following Ministry of Education changes to education funding and policies:

- Grades 9-12 average class size requirements have been adjusted from 22 to 28, with a board wide average of 28;
- All secondary students will be required to complete a minimum of 4 e-learning credits to graduate. These changes will take effect in 2020-2021;
- Hiring practices, specifically practices in relation to Regulation 274/12, will continue with a view to ensuring a framework where principals are able to hire qualified teachers based on merit and suitability for position;
- An amendment to the Provincial Code of Conduct to prohibit cell phone use in schools during instructional time effective September 2019;
- The “modernization of EQAO and its processes while using data to build better assessment and evaluation models that have a greater focus on equity”;
- A new 4 year math strategy which will include a new curriculum focused on basic concepts and skills;
- Legislation to require teachers to pass a math content knowledge course prior to entering the classroom/being certified by Ontario College of Teachers;
- A revised mandatory Career Studies course in grade 10 beginning in September 2019;
- A revised Business Studies and Computer Studies curriculum expected in 2020;
- An increased emphasis on Specialist High School Majors and experiential learning;
- New financial literacy elements added to the Grade 10 Career Studies course for implementation in September 2019;
- A revised First Nations, Metis and Inuit Studies curriculum for grades 9-12 for implementation in September 2019;
- A revised elementary curriculum with age appropriate elements of the Health and Physical Education curriculum will be implemented in September 2019; and
- A new digital curriculum platform beginning in September 2019.

In response to a query from Ms. Nadon-Campbell regarding whether or not the Indigenous Education Advisory Council will have input on the revised Indigenous studies curriculum, Superintendent MacDonald noted that the curriculum is developed at the provincial level. The District is responsible for the implementation. She advised that questions regarding the development of the curriculum be directed to the Ministry. She noted that the Ministry draws upon the expertise across the province in terms of curriculum development. Superintendent MacDonald noted that she would bring the question to the attention of Jody Alexander for discussion at a future meeting of ACE.

Superintendent MacDonald advised that there are still opportunities to work with the community on the implementation of the curriculum and the ways it can be brought to life in the classroom.

In response to a query from Trustee Campbell, Superintendent MacDonald noted that the District often takes a leadership role and leverages both professional development and its many partnerships to enhance and supplement the curriculum in a culturally sensitive manner.

Instructional Coach Rice noted that there has been a close collaboration with Indigenous community members on the implementation and supplementation of the new curriculum. Elders have provided their input;

Mr. Sutton advised that despite the curriculum being developed at the provincial level, locally administrators and teachers have an opportunity to make recommendations and bring the people and the resources into the classroom to make it local;

Superintendent MacDonald noted that the Ministry Hiring Practices consultation is ongoing and that members have an opportunity to participate. She noted the importance of ACE having an opportunity to discuss the questions and provide a collective response to the Ministry.

Trustee Ellis requested that the link to the consultation be provided to ACE members.

Mr. Wildman expressed the view that the proposed changes will have a negative impact on Occasional Teachers and will further increase their exodus.

Diversity and Equity Coordinator Lawrence noted that the culturally relevant pedagogy team has conducted training with school staff to prepare for Identity Based Data Collection. Training has also been conducted with Learning Support Services (LSS), MLO's as well as principals and vice principals to ensure the application of the diversity, equity and inclusion lens is a key part of the work of the district.

Diversity and Equity Coordinator Lawrence advised that a web-based training module for diversity and unconscious bias is being developed and will be

provided for all staff in an effort to build the District's capacity to deliver services effectively to diverse populations.

Diversity and Equity Coordinator Lawrence noted that the Black Student Forum was held on 25 March 2019 and over 260 students, staff and community representatives were in attendance. Chair Hayles requested more information on the Black Student forum at the 24 April 2019 meeting.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Committee of the Whole

There was no report.

8. New Business

Trustee Ellis noted that he attended primary, intermediate and junior assemblies at Featherston Drive Public School. The assemblies were in response to the shooting in Christchurch New Zealand. Staff and Parent Council felt compelled to act in the wake of the tragedy with a message of hope and to help discourage anti-Muslim sentiment.

Mr. Sutton advised that ACE continue to be mindful of the staff that work to support the diverse students of the District.

Ms. Girvan queried the Board's intent with its adoption of a motion in support for the UN Declaration regarding the International Decade for People of African Descent. She requested that it be discussed at a future meeting of ACE.

Mr. Brown stressed the importance of sharing the ACE agenda with organizations that have provided community voice.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

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Stacey Ann Morris, Chair, Advisory Committee on Equity