



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT PUBLIC

Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 7:30 pm
Board Room
Administration Building
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

- | | |
|---|---|
| Trustees Present: | Erica Braunovan, Donna Blackburn, Christine Boothby, Rob Campbell, Chris Ellis, Lyra Evans, Mark Fisher, Wendy Hough (electronic communication), Jennifer Jennekens, Keith Penny, Sandra Schwartz, Lynn Scott, Samantha Lin (Student Trustee) |
| Staff Present: | Camille Williams-Taylor (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Curriculum), Mike Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of Human Resources), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Katrine Mallan (Manager of Board Services), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications & Information Services), Kevin Gardner (Manager of Financial Services), Charles D'Aoust (Coordinator of Budget Services), Sharlene Hunter (Communications Coordinator), John MacKinnon, Audio-Visual Technician, Amanda Rock (Board/Committee Coordinator) |
| Non-Voting
Representatives
Present: | Christine Lanos, Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee (OCEOC); David Wildman, Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Occasional Teachers' Association (OCEOTA); Wulf Heidecker, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO/OCETF); Rupi Bergamin, Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators Network (OCSSAN) and Harvey Brown, Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE). |

1. Call to Order - Vice-Chair of the Board

Vice-Chair Braunovan called the meeting to order at 8:42 p.m. She 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 Agenda

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Chair Scott offered her congratulations to Cynthia Bled, former trustee of the Ottawa Board of Education and of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, for being recognized with her husband by the Alumni Association of the University of Ottawa with an Award of Excellence for their dedication to youth and support for youth programs as Honorary Members of the Alumni Association.

On behalf of the Board, Chair Scott extended congratulations to Rawlson King on his election to City Council as Councillor for Rideau-Rockcliffe.

Chair Scott advised that on 15 April 2019 the Board provided a professional development workshop for committee chairs on parliamentary procedure, rules for making motions, the role of the chair and techniques to ensure an orderly meeting. The Board will continue to work with committee chairs to develop tools and processes to support them in their role as chairs.

Trustee Schwartz commended Trustee Scott for recognizing Rawlson King being elected to City Council. She added that his election will result in a positive partnership with the District regarding various education issues for racialized students, especially in the eastern part of the city.

4. Briefing from the Director

Director Williams-Taylor advised that during the month of April students in grades four to twelve will have the chance to complete the OurSCHOOL Survey. This is an online school climate survey which is completed at school. The survey is confidential and anonymous and is administered every two years to provide valuable information about students' sense of safety and belonging at school. This informs School Learning Plans, School Bullying Prevention plans and District strategies and practices. The survey will be administered between 23 April and 10 May 2019. Parents may advise their child's school should they prefer their child not to participate.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that the OCDSB will be hosting a Parent Information Night on 23 April 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at Sir Robert Borden High

School. Dr. Jonathan Weiss from York University will be the keynote speaker and will address mental health and well-being with regard to students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The OCDSB Autism Spectrum Disorder team will also be present to provide mini workshops for parents regarding supports and services within the District.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that one of the District's own, Allison Fuisz, a grades 7 and 8 environmental science and social studies teacher at Bell High School, is one of 45 teachers across North America and Japan who have been awarded the Grosvenor Fellowship. Allison blends technology, nature and Indigenous perspectives to help foster a sense of curiosity and desire among her students to help protect the Earth. This fellowship program is a professional development opportunity that honours excellence in geographic education.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that, on 12 April 2019, Alta Vista Public School teacher Chantel Smith and Connaught Public School teacher Sharan Samagh, presented a workshop at the Ontario National Alliance of Black School Educators (ONASBE) conference. They shared their experiences as English as Second Language (ESL) and English Literacy Development (ELD) teachers through their participation in the Teacher Learning Leadership program. The participants in this session explored how to accelerate literacy learning for English language learners (ELLs).

Director Williams-Taylor welcomed Eric Hardie as a Superintendent of Instruction to the OCDSB.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. Matters for Action:

6.1 Report 19-036 Purchase of New Portable Classrooms for 2020-2021 (M. Carson, ext. 8881)

Your Committee had before it Report 19-036 seeking approval to purchase 20 new modular portable classrooms in order to provide the District with sufficient flexibility to accommodate student need throughout the system.

CFO Carson highlighted the following information:

- The District will only receive approximately half of the number of portables for September 2019 due to significant pressures on suppliers;
- The budget cost of the portable classrooms amounts to \$3.1 million;
- The District is facing significant pressure with moving portables to different sites to meet increased demand; and
- The capital reserves are the primary source of funding for the acquisition of portable classrooms.

In response to queries from trustees, the following information was provided:

- The cost differential between the portable classrooms currently used by the OCDSB and a more energy-efficient portable classroom may amount to a 50 percent increase;
- The portable classroom units are slightly more efficient than 15-20 years ago;
- The cost of a portable classroom unit is approximately \$150,000; and
- Energy-efficient portable classrooms are an issue that has been raised with the Ministry.

Trustee Lyra Evans encouraged the District to consider adding more permanent spaces to its facilities. Trustee Blackburn disagreed with Trustee Lyra Evans comments about portable classrooms. Some teachers and students are content with learning in a portable classroom. She added that the Board needs to be realistic with its expectations given the enrolment pressures it faces. She confirmed that coterminous boards use portable classrooms as well.

Moved by Trustee Blackburn,

THAT the purchase of up to 20 new modular portable classrooms, at a budgeted total cost of \$3,129,200 (excluding HST), be approved and funded from Capital Reserves, subject to Ministry approval.

CFO Carson noted the following:

- The Ministry does not allow school boards to use their own reserve funds to build permanent spaces;
- Portables are considered a temporary solution to enrolment and program growth;
- There are approximately 350 portable classrooms in the District;
- There is a backlog of schools that require small additions to their facilities;
- The Ministry is reluctant about school boards building more permanent spaces;
- The location of programs may need to be reviewed to best utilize the District's permanent space;
- The air quality of portables has improved from 15-20 years ago;
- The District spends \$1.5-2 million dollars a year to refurbish portable classrooms;
- The District is considering purchasing a permanent fleet of portable classrooms;
- There is an increased demand for temporary portable classrooms;
- The \$20,000 administrative and permit fee costs would be taken from the operating budget;

- The cost of disposing of a portable classroom pertains to reinstating the grounds where it was located; and
- The number of students that occupy portable classrooms in the District are below the maximum number allowed to comply with the *Ontario Fire Code Regulation 338/97*.

Trustee Ellis noted that his zone has seen an increase in portable classrooms being placed in schools which are not in a suburban area. Chair Scott suggested that the District consider the square footage of a portable classroom should class sizes increase, especially for secondary school students who are physically bigger.

Moved by Trustee Blackburn

THAT the purchase of up to 20 new modular portable classrooms, at a budgeted total cost of \$3,129,200 (excluding HST), be approved and funded from Capital Reserves, subject to Ministry approval.

Carried

6.2 Notice of Motion, Re: Establishment of Advocacy Committee as a Special Purpose Committee, Trustee Scott

Having given notice, Trustee Scott moved as follows:

Moved by Trustee Scott,

WHEREAS the original 6 October 2015 discussion of the proposal to establish an ad hoc committee to develop an advocacy strategy contemplated the establishment of a permanent advocacy committee;

WHEREAS the need for advocacy may emerge for many different topics and at many different times in ways that could not reasonably be foreseen in the development of an initial advocacy position in any given year;

WHEREAS the need to assist and support the chair of the board to present positions and advocate on behalf of the district and its students may arise with minimal notice such that it would not be feasible to hold fulsome discussions of issues in a timely way at regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole and Board meetings;

THEREFORE be it resolved,

A. THAT the current Ad Hoc Committee to Develop an Advocacy Strategy be reconstituted as a Special Purpose committee to be known as the Advocacy Strategy Committee;

B. THAT the membership of the Advocacy Strategy Committee comprise the chair and vice-chair of the board (ex officio) and up to four additional trustees;

C. THAT the mandate of the Advocacy Strategy Committee be

- i. to develop an annual advocacy strategy for board approval;
- ii. to develop advocacy positions for board approval; and
- iii. to advise and support the chair on specific advocacy issues and key messaging as needed and in a timely way;

D. THAT the Advocacy Strategy Committee meet at least once annually and on an as-required basis at the call of the Chair of the committee or at the request of the chair of the board; and

E. THAT the current members of the Ad Hoc Committee to Develop an Advocacy Strategy appointed on 3 December 2018 be confirmed as members of the new Advocacy Strategy Committee for the term ending 30 November 2019.

Chair Scott added the following:

- It is important to have a permanent committee to deal with issues of advocacy;
- With the change in government, there will be an ongoing need for advocacy on many topics that may be time-sensitive; and
- The current members of the Ad Hoc Committee to Develop an Advocacy Strategy should be re-elected as members of the Special Purpose committee.

In response to queries, the following information was provided:

- The Chair has a responsibility to respond to the Minister and make public statements on behalf of the Board;
- The Chair should always have an understanding of the Board's position on any particular issue;
- It is important to have a forum to discuss time-sensitive issues; and
- The advocacy committee provides members with an opportunity for the application of ideas, knowledge, expertise and bring back their best thinking to the Board on advocacy issues.

An amendment made by Trustee Schwartz,

THAT Part C (iii) specify that the Chair means the Chair of the Board.

Carried, friendly

In response queries, Executive Officer Giroux shared the following information:

- Committees of the Board are subject to public meeting provisions;
- A report from the Special Purpose committee will come forward to the Board; and
- The Special Purpose committee will operate like a working group.

In response to a query from Trustee Boothby, Chair Scott indicated that there will not be a need to have an in-camera session for this committee. She added that a rationale would be required to hold an in-camera session.

Moved by Chair Scott

A. THAT the current Ad Hoc Committee to Develop an Advocacy Strategy be reconstituted as a Special Purpose committee to be known as the Advocacy Strategy Committee;

B. THAT the membership of the Advocacy Strategy Committee comprise the chair and vice-chair of the board (ex officio) and up to four additional trustees;

C. THAT the mandate of the Advocacy Strategy Committee be

- to develop an annual advocacy strategy for board approval;**
- to develop advocacy positions for board approval; and**
- to advise and support the Chair of the Board on specific advocacy issues and key messaging as needed and in a timely way;**

D. THAT the Advocacy Strategy Committee meet at least once annually and on an as-required basis at the call of the Chair of the committee or at the request of the chair of the board; and

E. THAT the current members of the Ad Hoc Committee to Develop an Advocacy Strategy appointed on 3 December 2018 be confirmed as members of the new Advocacy Strategy Committee for the term ending 30 November 2019.

Carried

7. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

7.1 Audit Committee, 27 March 2019

Moved by Trustee Schwartz,

THAT the Audit Committee report, dated 27 March 2019, be received.

Carried

7.2 Advisory Committee on Equity, 28 March 2019

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity report, dated 28 March 2019, be received.

Harvey Brown advised the motion mentions Black-African descent. He requested that "black" be removed from the motion.

Chair Scott advised that "black" was not in the original recommendation.

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity report, dated 28 March 2019, be received as amended.

Carried

a. Funding to support mental health through an equity lens

Moved by Trustee Ellis, in substitution for 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 Métis and for male students of African descent.

Trustee Ellis noted that there the following concerns were raised at the Black Youth forum on 25 March 2019:

- Mental health issues are increasing among males of African descent; and
- There are barriers for First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Black youth in schools.

Trustee Blackburn expressed concern that the Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bi-sexual, and Queer (LGTBQ) community was not listed in this motion. She noted that they are a community at high risk for suicide.

Chair Scott recalled her discussion with ACE member June Girvan and relayed the following:

- The intent was not to narrow the listing of groups or re-victimize youth;
- The word "explore" was a deliberate choice in the recommendation;
- There are a host of other issues associated with mental health;

- The motion is intended to be inclusive by looking at specific needs under the mental health umbrella;
- The motion is for students of any race, origin, and/or sexual orientation.

During the discussion, committee members expressed the following opinions:

- The Board of Trustees is not precluded from exploring mental health supports for other groups in the future;
- The motion's intent may be captured without listing marginalized groups; and
- The motion may need sharper and more action-oriented language.

Director Williams-Taylor submitted that the word "explore" may be ambiguous and that it would be challenging to commit budget expenditures at this time. She added that barriers to accessing mental health services exist for the identified groups that have led to a deterioration of their sense of well-being and outcomes. Director Williams-Taylor emphasized that exploring the impact of identity on students' mental health is a complex undertaking. Partnerships with the greater community are important and the District may need to review its resources to have a positive impact on certain groups of students.

Director Williams-Taylor agreed that staff could provide a timeline of what the District may explore as possible discussion topics to support mental health for students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and male students of African descent.

During the ensuing discussion, the following was noted:

- The intent of the motion is to focus on the listed groups; and
- The groups of students listed in the motion are currently being under-served by the District.

Trustee Schwartz noted that only male students of African descent are identified in the motion for the following reasons:

- Few male Black students attended the mental health and self-care session at the Black Youth Forum held on 25 March 2019;
- Female Black students are concerned about their male peers; and
- It is important for schools to take preventative measures to mitigate risk for Black male youth and help them overcome

barriers to accessing the mental health services that they may need.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT "direct staff to" be inserted to follow "THAT the Board".

Carried, friendly

Trustee Lyra Evans emphasized that the motion does not preclude the Board from extending the intent of the motion to other marginalized groups.

Chair Scott agreed that there is a significant amount of learning and understanding to be gained from this initiative. She added that the intent of the motion is to begin a focused dialogue on this issue. She recalled that equity was not discussed when the OCDSB Mental Health Framework was created and that it may be timely to start reviewing the framework. She expressed confidence that the discussions will be compatible with the District's strategic directions.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that the new strategic plan could include a focus on the impact that identity has on students and provide the necessary mental health services. The District's current structure does not reflect an understanding that identity informs the District's work. She noted that the collection of identity-based data will inform patterns, trends, and outcomes of students and their experience in schools. This information will assist staff to target the District's mental health services and supports.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were noted:

- The motion refers to four marginalized groups as opposed to two groups;
- The identity-based data collection may identify what supports and services students need;
- The identified groups in the motion may not be accessing the District's services due to cultural and/or peer stigmas;
- The Board may want to review the motion in 12 to 18 months to be inclusive of other specific groups.

Trustee Hough expressed the opinion that prioritizing the identified groups is important with an intent to include other groups in the future.

An amendment moved by Trustee Hough,

THAT "commencing with students" replace "especially for students".

Trustee Hough expressed the view that it is important for the Board to consider that there are groups who have identity-based mental health issues.

During the ensuing discussion, committee members expressed concern about whether the motion is exclusionary.

With approval of the Board, Trustee Hough withdrew her amendment.

OCSSAN representative Rupi Bergamin expressed the opinion that the motion allows the District to focus on an issue that it may not have previously been aware of and expressed support for starting the conversation. She added that when educators are aware of different lenses it creates perspective to inform the District's work.

An amendment moved by Trustee Fisher,

THAT the motion be revised to read as follows:

A. THAT the Board direct staff to explore and seek to secure funding to support mental health through an equity lens, especially for students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and for male students of African descent; and

B. THAT the Board direct staff to assess barriers to accessing mental health services within the OCDSB.

Trustee Fisher expressed the view that "explore" is passive language, and that seeking to secure funding is more action-oriented. Chair Scott appreciated Trustee Fisher's intent but noted that a conversation needs to happen first. She expressed the opinion that the amendments are taking the motion ahead of the status of the issue based on her discussions with the Advisory Committee on Equity and Ms. Girvan. Trustee Blackburn expressed the view that Part B addresses the issues that will arise.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT "report on funding" replace "seek to secure funding" in Part A.

In response to a query from Trustee Blackburn, Director Williams-Taylor advised that there is an implicit understanding of what "report on" means and that staff will provide an update and timeline on the issue to trustees.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT "report on funding" replace "seek to secure funding" in Part A.

Carried

Trustee Ellis expressed the view that the language used in Part B may convolute the intent of focusing on the four identified groups in Part A of the motion.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Jennekens,

THAT "with initial focus on students" replace "especially for" in Part A.

Defeated.

Trustee Penny expressed the opinion that Part B highlights that students do not believe they can access mental health services.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT Part B be revised to add "especially for students who self identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and for male students of African descent."

B. THAT the Board direct staff to evaluate, through an equity lens, barriers to access mental health services within the OCDSB, especially for students who self identify as First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and for male students of African descent.

In response to a query from Trustee Ellis, Superintendent Symmonds advised that the initiative to fully explore the potential barriers that may exist for students to access mental health services within the District would be a significant undertaking. He added that a timeline would be developed and the work would require a dedicated work plan.

Trustee Blackburn expressed the opinion that Part B is the more action-oriented part of the motion. She added that Part A does not imply that the Board will be engaging in a meaningful discussion.

Trustee Campbell expressed the view that a lack of funding could be a potential barrier. The key issue is to explore the reasons why students are not equitably accessing mental health services.

Trustee Braunovan noted that there will be an opportunity to review the wording of the motion prior to the Board meeting of 23 April 2019.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT Part B be revised to read as follows:

B. THAT the Board direct staff to evaluate, through an equity lens, barriers to access mental health services within the OCDSB, especially for students who self identify as First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and for male students of African descent.

Carried

An amendment moved by Trustee Fisher,

THAT the motion be revised as follows:

A. THAT the Board direct staff to explore and report on funding to support mental health through an equity lens, especially for students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit and for male students of African descent.

B. THAT the Board direct staff to evaluate, through an equity lens, barriers to access mental health services within the OCDSB, especially for students who self identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit and for male students of African descent.

Carried

Trustee Scott thanked the Committee for the initial discussion. She reflected on whether it is more important to request funding for the initiative or to have a dialogue to determine what is needed to support students' access to mental health supports. She suggested that further discussion take place prior to an evaluation and request for funding.

Trustee Scott requested separate votes on each part of the recommendation.

Trustee Ellis encouraged the Committee to vote in favour of both parts of the motion.

Moved by Trustee Ellis

A. THAT the Board direct staff to explore and report on funding to support mental health through an equity lens, especially for students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit and for male students of African descent.

Carried

Moved by Trustee Ellis

B. THAT the Board direct staff to evaluate, through an equity lens, barriers to access mental health services within the OCDSB, especially for students who self identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit and for male students of African descent.

Carried

8. Information Items:

8.1 Report from OPSBA

a. Report from OPSBA Representatives

Trustee Penny advised that eastern region Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) meeting was a success and had the highest attendance ever. Thanks to Superintendent Baker, Manager Mallan and Kris Meawasige for smudging. Chair Scott also thanked Superintendent Farrish and Jennifer Perry for their attendance.

Trustee Penny also advised that the OPSBA AGM and the CSBA Congress will be held from 04-07 July 2019 in Toronto.

b. Call for Nominations for OPSBA Elected Positions 2019

Information was provided with regard to the call for nominations for OPSBA elected positions 2019.

8.2 New Ministry Initiatives Update (if required)

There were no new Ministry updates.

8.3 OSTA Update (if required)

There was no OSTA update.

9. Long Range Agendas (April to June 2019)

In response to a query from Trustee Ellis, the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan will be presented to the Board on 04 June 2019. Trustee Braunovan advised that the agenda planning meeting will discuss why the Long Range Agenda (LRA) excludes certain committees.

10. New Business - Information and Inquiries

There was no new business.

11. Adjournment

The 10:30 p.m. vote received the required 2/3 majority and the meeting adjourned at 10:46 p.m.

Erica Braunovan, Chair