



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT

Thursday, May 16, 2019, 6:00 pm
Gloucester High School
2060 Ogilvie Road
Ottawa, Ontario

Attendees Present Sytukie Joamie, Raiglee Alorut, Inini McHugh, Nina Stanton, Anthony Debassige, Jo VanHooser, Romaine Mitchell, Junior Ittusardjuat, and Jesse Paypompee-Kavanaugh.

Staff Present Superintendent Dorothy Baker, Vice-Principal Jody Alexander, Student Support and Re-engagement Coordinator Kris Meawasige, Instructional Coaches Kareena Butler and Nancy Henry, and Committee Coordinator Amanda Rock.

1. Opening

Vice-Principal Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:14 p.m. Student Support and Re-Engagement Coordinator Meawasige led a smudge and Raiglee Alorut singing an opening song. Sytukie Joamie gave an opening prayer.

2. Approval of the 18 April 2019 IEAC Minutes

The minutes of the IEAC meeting of 18 April 2019 were approved with the following additions:

Sytukie Joamie advised that students enroll in French courses when they arrive from the Inuit Nunangat. He stressed that their focus should be to learn the English language with regard to page three of the IEAC 18 April 2019 report. He added that it would be beneficial for students to have the choice of learning in the Inuktitut language. Superintendent Baker advised that she has been discussing this issue with Romaine Mitchell from the Ministry.

Jo VanHooser added that the District's students may enroll in many different language courses and that Inuktitut ought to be a course offering. Students should have the choice to learn their primary/cultural language.

3. Identity-Based Data Collection Update

Superintendent Baker updated the IEAC on the identity based data collection. She noted the following:

- The District is currently planning student focus groups followed by parent/community groups;
- An external facilitator has been arranged for all groups;
- The student focus group will be held on 31 May 2019 which will include five students from each secondary school site;
- The student focus group for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students will be held at a separate venue;
- The feedback questions will be changed based on the community's input;
- The District will be taking a strength-based approach in asking the feedback questions and to identify barriers that exist;
- Parent and community meetings are will be held on 06 June and 11 June 2019;
- The community partners who attended previous meetings made a commitment to have an ongoing relationship with the District for the identity based data process;
- The District needs everyone's contribution to the parent and community feedback; and
- The identity-based data collection process will be a standing item on the IEAC agenda.

4. Strategic Plan 2019-2023 Update

Superintendent Baker shared that the District is developing the new 2019-2023 Strategic Plan and noted the following:

- Extensive consultation with community groups has been completed to review the draft strategic plan;
- Learning, a culture of caring and equity, social responsibility and the environment were topics of interest for many parents and community members;
- The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan has goals that are tied to three cultures: Culture of Caring, Culture of Innovation, and Culture of Social Responsibility;
- The goals of the Strategic Plan are outlined for students, staff, and the system;
- The IEAC is encouraged to provide feedback on the draft strategic plan; and
- The work listed in the draft strategic plan is not an exhaustive list. The District has outlined high-level objectives that will include many initiatives.

Superintendent Baker advised that she will share a link with the IEAC to provide feedback on the 2019-2023 Draft Strategic Plan:

<https://ocdsb.ca/cms/One.aspx?portalId=55478&pageId=18797344>

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The IEAC indicated that the document is concise and detailed; and
- The Black community currently attends the Advisory Committee on Equity meetings.

Superintendent Baker shared that the District's intention is to connect the new Strategic Plan directly to schools and classrooms.

5. Standing Recommendations

Vice-Principal Alexander recalled that a student member urged the OCDSB to act on the recommendations made by the IEAC. She noted that next year's goals for the IEAC will be submitted to Romaine Mitchell, from the Ministry of Education, and will be in the Board Action Plan.

She noted the following as priorities:

- Safe spaces for Indigenous students;
- Continuing learning/training with educators as often as possible; and
- Student-led presentations.

Instructional Coach Henry shared that one student-led presentation was held with more planned in the future. Students will typically be presenting to younger peers imparting their knowledge about Indigenous culture. She added that there is an interest from a few students who want to present to staff for staff cultural awareness. The format of the presentations is nearly finalized however it has been challenging to have at staff meetings due to Ministry mandated agenda items for compulsory staff meetings.

Instructional Coach Butler shared that four of the District's Indigenous youth were invited to Curriculum Services to share their voices with the Indigenous Education Team.

Superintendent Baker shared that a half day of professional learning for all staff will be focused on Indigenous education next year.

In response to a query, Romaine Mitchell advised that most post-secondary institutions (teacher's college) have a requirement to complete one course in Indigenous Studies. Some university programs are trying to recruit students in Indigenous Studies into Master's programs.

Sytukie Joamie commented that the Indigenous people have always had to learn about other cultures.

Mr. Mitchell noted that societies can co-exist together in a realm of mutual respect. Some of the most enriching places to go are places of worship. He added that when the Indigenous people have ceremonies with attending guests they offer a hand of friendship to them with the hope that others will honour them. Mr. Joamie added that it is still a choice to participate in the national anthem.

6. Board Action Plan Update

Vice Principal Alexander noted that the following standing recommendations have been moved to the Board Action Plan to be working on with the Indigenous Education Team:

- Safe spaces for Indigenous students;
- Leverage data from community partners;
- Leverage technology to connect Indigenous youth; and
- Conduct supported student-led presentations at schools across the District.

7. IEAC Annual Report

Vice-Principal Alexander shared the draft IEAC Annual Report that was drafted by Monique Manatch and herself. It outlines the work that the IEAC has completed this year as well as its role, recommendations that have come forward, highlights, and next steps going forward for the 2019-2020 school year.

Vice-Principal Alexander and Superintendent Baker noted the following:

- The IEAC is encouraged to provide their feedback on the draft IEAC Annual Report;
- The IEAC recommends that the District consider setting equitable hiring practices as a priority; and
- Intentional hiring practices may be a transparent strategy rather than a written policy.

Romaine Mitchell shared that some school boards have elders employed on a contract/retainer basis.

In response to a query, Romaine Mitchell stated that staff self-identification is an issue that is being discussed at the Ministry level.

In response to a query, Superintendent Baker advised that the 2019-2023 Draft Strategic Plan has not yet been approved.

Mr. Joamie noted that the most difficult thing is to implement change. He explained that the Nunavut government would like 85 percent of its employees to be Inuit but substantial efforts have not been made to make this a reality. He stressed the educators working in the schools are the people who need to be

representative of the students who they serve. Mr. Mitchell noted that the only constant is change. There is currently an entire Ministry focused on Indigenous Education. He submitted that the structure of Indigenous Education is still in its infancy in terms of being incorporated into all subject areas.

In response to a query about the draft Strategic Plan, Superintendent Baker advised that there is language regarding a desired outcome of a “more representative workforce” with the intention being across all employee groups.

Vice-Principal Alexander requested feedback on Key Next Steps of the IEAC Annual Report and the following was provided:

- Students should be included in the first next step;
- The Key Next Steps noted in the IEAC Annual Report are activities intended for the IEAC to undertake next year; and
- The Key Next Steps may be recommendations to the Board in the future.

Vice-Principal Alexander advised that a smudging protocol is about providing guidelines to schools to give opportunity to students to smudge. She shared that she has reviewed protocols from other Districts. The draft still needs to be reviewed by the OCDSB Facilities Management.

Raiglee Alorut expressed concern over the language used in the IEAC Annual Report's recommendations.

The following feedback was noted:

- The IEAC Annual Report should identify who "we", "them" and "their" is;
- Some of the recommendations are already being implemented; and
- Different cultures have different ways of identifying how the 2SLGBTQ+ community is respected.

Vice-Principal Alexander requested that if anyone has any other comments to share in the near future as the report will be presented to the Committee of the Whole on 04 June 2019.

8. Closing

Vice-Principal Alexander advised that the 16 May 2019 meeting is the IEAC's last meeting of the 2018-2019 school year. She encouraged members to participate in a final sharing circle, with respect to their experience with IEAC this year.

Romaine Mitchell offered a closing prayer.

Instructional Coach Henry shared that she will not be in her role next year. She thanked the IEAC for sharing their thoughts and experiences.

Superintendent Baker shared that Ms. Henry will be the new Vice-Principal at Ridgemont High School next year. Mr. Joamie extended his thanks for her work and her kindness as a human being.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.