



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT PUBLIC

Tuesday, May 21, 2019, 7:00 pm
Board Room
Administration Building
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

Trustees Present: Donna Blackburn, Christine Boothby, Rob Campbell, Chris Ellis, Mark Fisher, Jennifer Jennekens, Keith Penny, Sandra Schwartz (electronic communication), Lynn Scott, Isaac Glassman (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), Eric Hardie (Superintendent of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Karyn Carty Ostafichuk (Manager of Planning), Joan Oracheski (Manager of Research, Analytics, and Evaluation), Colin Anderson (Principal of Safe Schools), Katrine Mallan (Manager of Board Services), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications & Information Services), Sharlene Hunter (Communications Coordinator), John MacKinnon, Audio-Visual Technician, Amanda Rock (Board/Committee Coordinator)

Non-Voting Representatives Present: Brent Smith, Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee (OCEOC); Christine Moulaison, Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC); Rupi Bergamin, Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators Network (OCSSAN); Cathy Bailey, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF), and Brian Lesage, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO).

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

Vice-Chair Jennekens called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 Blackburn

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Chair Scott advised that school councils will be holding fund raising activities in the spring. One activity that has attracted the attention of Health Canada is garage sales. The *Hazardous Products Act* states that anyone holding a garage sale is legally responsible for ensuring that products sold, whether new or used, are safe and meet current safety standards. Products intended for use by children, which include baby gates, walkers, car seats, cribs, playpens, toys that may present choking hazards, and helmets, must meet the requirements of the *Hazardous Products Act*.

Chair Scott advised that the Student Recognition awards will be held on the 30 May 2019 and Volunteer Appreciation Day is 13 June 2019.

4. Briefing from the Director

Director Williams-Taylor advised that over 300 students in grades 4 to 12 from across the province participated at the annual provincial French public-speaking event. Students in grades 4 to 8 participated in a non-competitive festival showcasing their French language and public speaking skills, while students in grades 9 to 12 participated in a competitive Concours for cash prizes and partial scholarships to York University's Glendon Campus and the University of Ottawa. Director Williams-Taylor announced that four OCDSB students were winners. Félicitations Yi Fei Tao and Catherine Tao from Colonel By Secondary School, Raina Barara from Canterbury High School, and Aser Abdelgawad from Lisgar Collegiate Institute.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that Bhavya Mohan, a student at Colonel By Secondary School, has won the "Best Project Award" at the 2019 Canada-wide Science Fair. Bhavya came first out of 464 other projects for his work on immunotherapy, which is a type of cancer treatment that helps the immune system fight cancer cells. He will be attending the European Union Contest for Young Scientists in Bulgaria in September 2019. Director Williams-Taylor congratulated Bhavya for his outstanding achievement.

Director Williams-Taylor shared that the Date with Diversity was held at Canterbury High School on 14 May 2019. The Human Library format engaged staff, students and trustees in explorations of the impact of identity through the real life stories that were shared. The narratives illuminated the intersectional nature of diversity and gave participants much to consider in our daily interactions in schools and communities.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. Matters for Action:

6.1 Notice of Motion, Re: English Program, Trustee Campbell

Having given notice, Trustee Campbell moved as follows:

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

WHEREAS English Core French (ECF) program numbers have reduced slowly for years, but this reduction may have accelerated recently due to the possible confluence of (a) recent JK/SK program changes, (b) continued de facto program streaming of special education and ELL students, and (c) tipping point perceptions of relative program desirability;

WHEREAS continued smaller program numbers across many schools, coupled with important relative class composition challenges, could lead to undesirably small or under-resourced classes, programs, and schools, risking:

- (a) accelerated reputational and market reduction,
- (b) increased inequities in student learning and teacher workload,
- (c) social sorting possibly unique in Ontario,
- (d) increased accommodations churn and splitting communities, and
- (e) human, capital, and bussing resourcing inefficiencies, and so together risking Board failure of both equity and stewardship tests,

WHEREAS actual French language proficiency outcomes of MFI versus EFI versus OCSB split model students may be trivial when tested at Grade 10, and as the last major FI literature review and FI vs ECF strategic purposes planning report is several years old;

AND WHEREAS it is important to take advantage of the current accommodations moratorium to purposefully re-examine our programming offerings strategically before locking in another large area of the District for several years through additional large-scale accommodation reviews;

THEREFORE be it resolved:

A. THAT staff prepare a report for Board discussion in early Fall 2019 comparing the current and projected student enrolment numbers of the elementary English Core French programs with the elementary Early and Middle French Immersion programs, including:

- i. Enrolment for special education (non-gifted), English language learners (ELL), and SES, all disaggregated by grade, division, and program colocation nature; and
- ii. Contribution rates to high school pathways, disaggregated by program colocation nature.

B. THAT this report additionally identify:

- i. Any key operational, financial, pedagogical, community-impacting, or other strategic advantages and/or disadvantages related to its findings; and
- ii. Any major programming, accommodations, policy, resourcing, and/or other strategic changes which might be expected to significantly and reliably address any concerns identified.

Trustee Campbell further stated that his motion is an information request for a report to come forward in the fall of 2019 for trustee discussion. In reviewing registration statistics, he has noted a decline in the early primary English program year-over-year and speculates that this may be the result of the 50/50 Kindergarten program introduced by the District.

Given the current provincial moratorium on accommodation reviews, Trustee Campbell believes that it is a good time to gather information on the English program as requested in the motion. Trustee Campbell outlined the two basic concerns motivating his motion. First, that the District may be experiencing social sorting, which has a negative impact on public education. Second, that the District may have important inefficiencies or non-optimal optimization of how we structure our schools and programs.

Trustees expressed support for the motion being brought forward. In response to a query, Director Williams-Taylor agreed with Trustee Campbell that the issues identified within the motion relate to the program delivery. She added that the issue is a program and operational matter that requires further exploration. She explained that the work has begun to review the English with Core French program and that an update is slated to be presented in the fall of 2019. The timeline will allow staff to present a report which provides for a robust discussion prior to anticipating action items.

CFO Carson shared that the end of October 2019 is the timeline that staff will be working towards.

Trustees spoke in support of the motion, and asked Trustee Campbell and staff several questions of clarification to which the following information was provided:

- The intent of the motion is to review academic and applied stream pathways as well as current and projected data trends;
- Requesting community feedback with regard to the program choices for the District's families may be an area to explore for the proposed motion; and
- Part B of the motion is intended to highlight areas of concern;
- Part B(ii) is intended to be a brainstorming exercise to gather options and ideas; and
- The motion is intended to support a discussion among senior staff and trustees.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that Part A of the motion lends itself to a robust conversation. She cautioned against the notion of having a speculative discussion implied in Part B of the motion. Staff are reluctant to speculate on the reasoning behind enrolment trends in the English with Core French program prior to having a discussion.

tee Penny expressed his concern that the motion simply compiles enrolment statistics, and does not address the underlying reasons that the District's families opt for particular program choices. Trustee Campbell explained that this is a first step to inform further discussion. Once the board has the data, additional qualitative and quantitative research may be requested to complete a fulsome study to address the trends observed.

In response to a query from Trustee Ellis, Manager Carty-Ostafichuk advised that the District does not yet have adequate data to reflect on the on the impact of 50/50 Kindergarten on the equitable enrolment in the EFI program. Parents' choice of enrollment pathways, taking school changes into consideration, is critical to the discussion.

Trustee Scott noted that schools having small enrolments in the English program can impact on the ability to create viable programs. She queried whether information will be provided with regard to cohort size per grade on a school by school basis to understand the implications of small enrolments in the English program.

Manager Carty-Ostafichuk provided the following information:

- Staff will be reviewing trends in the last 15 years and providing projections for the next 15 years but cautioned it is difficult to make projections for the distant future; and

- Staff will be providing value-added information such as cohort size and the location of schools to assist trustees in examining the issue.

Trustee Scott commented that the Board may want to consider reviewing policy decisions that have possibly impacted the District's program offerings. She added that the JK/SK 50/50 program implementation, the addition of the MFI program and accommodation reviews have contributed to significant changes in program delivery. The District does not currently know if any one of these factors has contributed to policy decisions. She noted that the discussions should be based around the following three questions:

- Is there an issue with the enrolment trends for the English with Core French program?
- What is the scope of the issue? and
- How big is the impact of this issue on the District?

ETFO representative Brian Lesage noted the following:

- The root of the data collection is crucial to addressing enrolment trends;
- A mechanism could be created for teachers' voices and experiences to be heard; and
- Operational and pedagogical change is more likely to happen if the District consults with its educators.

Trustee Campbell submitted that further consultation may be required and requested his colleagues to support the motion for further discussion.

Moved by Trustee Campbell

A. THAT staff prepare a report for Board discussion in early Fall 2019 comparing the current and projected student enrolment numbers of the elementary English Core French programs with the elementary Early and Middle French Immersion programs, including:

- i. Enrolment for special education (non-gifted), English language learners (ELL), and SES, all disaggregated by grade, division, and program colocation nature; and
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B. THAT this report additionally identify:

- i. **Any key operational, financial, pedagogical, community-impacting, or other strategic advantages and/or disadvantages related to its findings; and**
- ii. **Any major programming, accommodations, policy, resourcing, and/or other strategic changes which might be expected to significantly and reliably address any concerns identified.**

Carried

7. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

7.1 Parent Involvement Committee, 17 April 2019

Moved by Trustee Blackburn,

THAT the Parent Involvement Committee report, dated 17 April 2019, be received.

Carried

7.2 Advisory Committee on Equity, 25 April 2019

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity report, dated 25 April 2019, be received.

Trustee Ellis requested that his and Trustee Campbell's name are reflected as non-voting trustee members in the report's attendance.

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT the Advisory Committee on Equity report, dated 25 April 2019, be received, as amended.

Carried

8. Matters for Discussion:

8.1 Report 19-062, Student Suspension Report for 2017-2018 School Year

Your Committee had before it Report 19-062 providing student suspension data and analysis from the 2017-2018 school year, including information on how principals determine if suspension is appropriate, and measures being taken to proactively reduce instances which may result in suspension.

Associate Director Reynolds and System Principal Anderson provided an overview of the report and highlighted the following:

- Principals have responsibilities under the *Education Act* and Board Policy and Procedure to consider suspension in response to some student behaviours;
- When student behaviours take place that result in suspension, the goal of the suspension is correction, redirection, and education;
- Suspensions help students and parents understand the standards of behaviour and promote a safe learning environment;
- Behaviours resulting in suspension continue to increase faster than enrolment, particularly at the elementary level;
- Boys, (particularly those living in low socioeconomic status neighbourhoods) continue to be suspended in all areas at a greater rate than girls;
- Students identified with a Behavioural exceptionality are suspended at the highest rate of any group;
- The majority of students suspended are suspended for one day only and once only in a school year;
- The District operates under a framework of progressive discipline to reduce suspension rates;
- Progressive discipline and suspensions are used to help students understand the standards of behaviours in the District's schools;
- All suspensions are between one and twenty school days in duration;
- Students and their families are made aware of the suspension process and have the right to appeal any suspension;
- Proactive measures include informal coaching and mentoring for classroom teachers to increase their toolkit for working with students; and
- Behaviour Modification Systems (BMS) are an alternative to suspension; and
- The District will continue to explore ways of supporting students' self-regulation and providing engaging, meaningful and impactful learning opportunities to reduce dysregulated behaviours.

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

- Student exclusions are not considered to be disciplinary actions, but rather a measure when there are no other options in the short-term to ensure safety in the classroom;

- Learning support teachers and other resources are provided to schools to assist them in working with students with dysregulated behaviours;
- Training on methods of addressing dysregulated behaviours was provided to teachers last year. There is no independent mechanism currently available to determine whether suspensions have decreased as a result of teacher training;
- Mitigating factors are considered when a suspension is imposed;
- Having an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) determination and/or an Individual Education Plan (IEP) may not always provide greater supports for students unless there is a demonstrated need;
- The District does not track incidents that did not result in a suspension or lenient disciplinary measures based on mitigating factors;
- Incidents involving illicit, recreational drugs are categorized under "Alcohol/Other". The use of illicit drugs could lead to interventions other than suspension. Suspensions are imposed for drug trafficking;
- Individual student incidents are tracked at the school level;
- The Disproportionality Index shows how students in identified groups are often suspended disproportionately, particularly when multiple groups intersect. For example, the number of boys residing in a low socioeconomic status neighbourhood who are suspended indicates a greater rate of disproportionality. The Index may be helpful when identity based data becomes available;
- Students living in low SES neighbourhoods represent approximately 25% of the District's student population, and 50% of all students who have received suspensions;
- It was suggested that a suspension action plan may be required to identify and address behaviour issues that may result in suspension;
- Students with behavioural exceptionalities, including oppositional defiant disorder and conduct disorder, may have difficulty in managing their behaviour under certain conditions in a school setting. IPRC and multi-disciplinary teams explore options to support these students in collaboration with the student's family;
- Trends have not been identified for students who have a behaviour diagnosis and suffer from mental health issues;
- The District intends to address underlying stressors and concerns for students to reduce the risk of behaviours leading to suspension;

- Progressive discipline can help reduce the number of incidents that may result in suspension;
- Non-voting committee members noted the following points when asked to identify other areas of focus for the District:
 - There is a lack of common understanding about the meaning of progressive discipline;
 - Many schools do not have a progressive discipline plan;
 - Teachers are often told that confidentiality issues are the reason that they are not being made aware of progressive discipline steps being taken for students;
 - Clear communication between teachers and administrators are necessary to address dysregulated behaviour;
 - Suspension may erode relationships between staff and students; and
 - A student's dysregulated behaviour may communicate their frustration at not seeing themselves as learners.

Trustee Campbell provided notice of his intent to bring forward a motion with respect to the development of a policy regarding student exclusions.

Trustee Scott expressed appreciation for the quality of the report and the suspension data. She added that the intersectionalities presented in the data can help the District better understand students' needs and apply different strategies and resources to address some of the underlying issues associated with suspensions.

8.2 Report 19-059, Supporting Indigenous Learners at the OCDSB

Your Committee had before it Report 19-059 providing an update on Indigenous Education within the OCDSB for the 2017-2018 school year.

In introducing the report, Superintendent Baker remarked that over the last several years staff has presented reports on Indigenous Education at different times of the year. This is a report on the 2017-2018 year, and includes bridge information in anticipation of a more fulsome report which will be presented to the Board in 2019-2020. The format of the report is structured around the Ministry goals for Indigenous Education, which include: improving student well-being; closing achievement gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students; and increasing public confidence.

System Vice-Principal Alexander highlighted the following:

- The Indigenous Education learning team has been working hard to build trusting relationships among and between staff, students and families.
- The report highlight the phases of understanding and knowledge that our educators have as they move along the learning continuum from awareness to engagement;
- Some educators are in the early stages of understanding different Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy;
- Other teachers are starting to engage with Indigenous history, contemporary issues and implement and embed approaches to learning from the Indigenous perspective in their classrooms with the support of the Indigenous Education learning team;
- The final stage, and the desired outcome, is that teachers will be able to embed and engage in the work on their own;
- The Indigenous Education learning team has had many opportunities to listen to the community and students in order to empower them to become leaders in our system; and
- The Board will be joined by Indigenous student Gaanabouté Gagné as a student trustee in September 2019.

Trustees congratulated the team for closing some of the academic gaps and noted their appreciation for the work staff is doing to rebuild trust with our Indigenous communities.

The following points were noted in response to questions:

- Statistically speaking, the well-being of Indigenous students can be at risk. To address this, the team has hired a second Student Support Coordinator to create a safe and caring environment and ensure that Indigenous students see themselves as part of the school community;
- The small number of self-identified Indigenous students makes a cohort analysis with respect to specific questions challenging. However, building relationships with students gives the team insight into how to best support students going forward.
- In some cases, students will informally self-identify themselves to a trusted staff member, but may prefer not to self-identify through formal mechanisms. The willingness to self-identify is about trust;
- An important component of relationship-building with the Indigenous community includes developing the trust and understanding of how the data is being used to support their education;

- Approximately 2% of our student population has identified as Indigenous. Based on Census data, an analysis of OurSCHOOLS survey data (which offers an opportunity for self-identification), and informal conversations with community partners, staff estimates that the number is closer to 4-5%;
- The District is exploring opportunities to offer Indigenous language courses to students. The Regional Ministry Representative is working with Elders and community partners to develop a pilot project whereby the Elders' Circle would receive applications from native speakers and recommend those applicants to the Ontario College of Teachers, thereby enabling those speakers to teach courses at the secondary level. There may be opportunities for programming at the elementary level as well;
- Barriers to teaching Indigenous languages include the diversity of languages within the Indigenous communities in the Ottawa region and the small pool of individuals with both the language skill and teaching qualifications;
- The Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) provides important direction and input into the Board Action Plan for Indigenous Education. IEAC is interested in suspension rates, but is more interested in graduation rates, supporting students along their education path, and embedding Indigenous ways of knowing into the curriculum;
- The District is doing a good job of building the relationships and creating the environment and spaces within our schools that improve the sense of belonging and well-being for our Indigenous students;
- The Indigenous Education learning team and the itinerant Indigenous coach are working with groups of teachers to impart unique Indigenous approaches and pedagogies for use in the classroom and having meaningful conversations about assessment. As a District, we have developed successful approaches to this work. The challenge is reaching more teachers;
- Staff is exploring opportunities to invite local and national Indigenous leaders to come to work with the Board and senior staff. Additionally, a newsletter is shared with principals that contains information on events taking place within the Indigenous communities to which anyone is welcome to attend;
- Trustee Fisher expressed an interest in exploring opportunities for the Board to meet outside a formal setting with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and leaders in other communities, to discuss issues of common concern;

- Trustee Blackburn noted that she found attending a meeting of the IEAC helpful to her understanding and was impressed by the number of students in attendance at the meeting;
- The Board Action Plan for Indigenous Education is funded by the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) and the Education Program-Other (EPO) grant;
- It is staff's understanding that there is a continued commitment by the Ministry to continue funding Indigenous Education, but cannot yet speak to specifics;
- Significant work has been undertaken to support Indigenous students at the newly amalgamated Gloucester HS. However, there are First Nations, Metis and Inuit students in all OCDSB schools. In order to make all schools places of belonging, schools must recognize a safe space for students to go, have protocols in place for smudging, build capacity and understanding in teachers and educators, and develop relationships and partnerships with students and the community;
- In response to a question, OCSSAN representative Rupi Bergamin noted that as teachers and non-Indigenous students are exposed to, engage in, and build their understanding of Indigenous culture, history and practices, they will bring their awareness and appreciation to the classroom, the curriculum and to their relationships with Indigenous students;
- Teachers have emphasized the positive impact on all students when valuing and celebrating Indigenous culture;
- Trustee Scott queried whether the fall report would provide information on the distribution of Indigenous students across the District. Superintendent Baker noted that there has been an increase in the Indigenous population in the western area of the District. Staff will provide updated information to trustees in memo format; and
- Vice-Principal Alexander described the way IEAC members, who come from different traditions, sit together in a circle of equals to work with and learn from each other. She reflected that this pedagogical approach to the use of physical space would be helpful to the students and families for whom institutional spaces may unintentionally be a place of trauma.

9. Information Items:

9.1 Report from OPSBA (if required)

There was no report from the OPSBA representatives.

9.2 New Ministry Initiatives Update

Trustee Scott advised the revised Indigenous Education curriculum was released on 21 May 2019. She shared the Ministry's link to the revised curriculum with trustees and senior staff:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/first-nations-metis-and-inuit-studies.html>

9.3 OSTA Update (if required)

There was no OSTA update.

10. Long Range Agendas (May to June 2019)

The long range agenda was provided for information.

11. New Business - Information and Inquiries

Trustee Campbell queried whether staff had any comments regarding Minister Thompson's reaction to statements made by the Peel District School Board about governance reviews. Director Williams-Taylor advised that does not have information on that item.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Jennifer Jennekens, Acting Chair for

Erica Braunovan, Chair