

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
Report No. 19-096**

5 November 2019

Final Measurement Report of the Strategic Plan 2015-2019

Key Contact: Michele Giroux, Executive Officer, 613-596-8211/8310

PURPOSE:

1. To present, for discussion, a final status report on the objectives of the 2015-2019 strategic plan at the end of year four of the plan.

CONTEXT:

2. The OCDSB has a four-year strategic planning cycle. The 2015-2019 plan was built on five (5) key objectives: Equity, Engagement, Learning, Stewardship and Well-Being. The work done under these objectives was aimed at supporting the Board in achieving its key responsibilities of student achievement and student well-being. The following overview is provided to guide a reflection on the progress made on each of the strategic objectives. Attached are the progress reports for four of five strategic objectives: Equity, Engagement, Stewardship and Well-Being. An examination of the District's performance on the Learning objective will be provided with the Annual Student Achievement Report (ASAR). Each progress report includes a one (1) page summary of the work done on each strategic objective over the four (4) years of the plan, and an in-depth exploration of actions and achievement at the end of year four (see Appendix A-D).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. The 2015-2019 plan was instrumental in moving the District forward as an organization that is effectively guided by and focused on its strategic objectives. The District can be proud of the significant progress that was made over the past four years and there are strategies and lessons learned that will carry forward towards the implementation of the 2019-2023 strategic plan.

Considering the landscape of the District over the life of this plan, some significant strides were made in the following areas:

- implementation of 50/50 kindergarten program;
- renewal of elementary and secondary program frameworks;
- improved learning conditions for students via school utilization through consolidations;
- expanded capacity for engagement; and
- Increased environmental stewardship.

Commonalities Across the Implementation of Strategic Objectives

Capacity Building

4. Staff capacity building/training was a key strategy employed to ensure progress on a number of the strategic plan objectives. Over the past four years, the District made investments in professional development and training in support of student learning, well-being and equity. Parent and student development have been addressed and a means to improving overall community/system engagement.

Student Voice

5. Over the life of this plan, the District made a concerted effort to seek and incorporate student voice. This strategy has been activated for example through forums and conferences such as the Black Youth Conference, Date with Diversity, the Indigenous Student Forum, and the Rainbow Youth Forum. Feedback from students involved with these events reveal feelings of pride in taking on leadership roles in working directly with and supporting their peers learning of about identity, experience and culture. Additionally, there was an increase in student voice during consultations on the new strategic plan. The cumulative effect of this is that student voice is increasingly shaping learning and decision-making.

Community Partnerships

6. Community organizations continued to play a significant role, effectively partnering with the OCDSB to fulfill its responsibility and commitments in social and environmental stewardship, and to deliver services in many areas including mental health support for students and staff, affirming student identity, and engaging with 'at risk' students. Moreover, the District has seen an increased use of schools for community events, strengthening the position of the OCDSB as a community hub and integral to community life in the city.

Key Accomplishments - Progress Report

7. Attached as Appendices A-D are the final Progress Reports on Equity, Engagement, Stewardship and Well-Being. Each report includes a one (1) page summary and a detailed narrative report. The following is a narrative overview of some key accomplishments over the past four years.

Equity

8. Over the past four years, the district has significantly increased its understanding of equity issues. The district has built a strong foundation of equity events which help to build awareness and a sense of belonging. While there are many events to be proud of, success in this area was exemplified by the district's very strong presence in the 2019 Pride Parade. These awareness building events were supported by the development of resources which were designed to build system knowledge and capacity. The OCDSB Gender Identity Guidelines are an excellent example of our leadership in this area.

A significant initiative by the Board of Trustees was the adoption of the United Nations (UN) proclamation of the International Decade of People of African Descent. This was an important step in our commitment to acknowledging the history of racism and bias in education and making a commitment to move forward. Other

supporting work was undertaken in the preparation for the collection of identity based data which will help to identify and overcome experience of systemic barriers and bias in the system. Through feedback from the focus groups, the District gained increased knowledge and understanding about barriers, a greater ability to define these barriers and the persons facing them. As such, the OCDSB is now in a stronger position to distinguish and determine relevant supports for students and the means to allocate resources (financial, human, technology, equipment etc.) towards measurable improvements in student outcomes.

Another key area of growth over the life of the plan was the expansion of the Indigenous Education learning team. The allocation of dedicated staff resources has facilitated the direct provision of supports to Indigenous students and families. In a curricular context, the team has been instrumental in providing professional development and resources to all schools to ensure that Indigenous history and culture is embedded into curriculum delivery. Two (2) key examples include the piloting of a grade 11 English course focused on Indigenous education; and the very successful INSTEM project established at Gloucester High School in partnership with ActuaCanada.

Engagement

9. Community engagement remained foundational to our work, both at a project and operational level. Many of our activities provided opportunities for connecting, dialoguing, for meaningful interaction, problem solving and collaboration.

A key priority in the 2015-2019 plan was the development of tools and resources to facilitate engagement with and amongst our stakeholder communities. The district invested heavily in the communications infrastructure to support engagement. This included the redesign of information and infrastructure of the district and school websites; the development of a staff, student and parental portal; an integrated school to home communication system; a platform of engagement tools; enhanced social media; redesign of the school council newsletter; and the creation of a monthly newsletter to all parents. This work included laying the foundation for improved internal communication which is a priority of the new strategic plan.

Additionally, an increase in parent and student engagement was observed. In an academic context, there has been increased emphasis on engagement strategies to support student success. For example, these strategies included the role of the Indigenous Student Support Coordinator and the work with the Youth Services Bureau.

Stewardship

10. The 2015-2019 strategic plan recognized the importance of enhancing student learning through effective school accommodation. The district developed a comprehensive school accommodation review process which was intended to run over the four years of the plan. In year one, the district undertook two reviews; the Western Area review which involved 29 schools and the Eastern Secondary Review which involved two (2) secondary schools. The reviews addressed a range of complex and sometimes emotional issues, but resulted in accommodation decisions focused on enhancing student learning opportunities and increasing school

utilization rates. After one year, the province imposed a moratorium on school accommodation reviews.

Other key work in stewardship addressed environmental issues and our commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (see Table 1).

Table 1. GHG Emissions data 2013-2018

	FY2013 (base year)	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
GHG Emissions (raw data)	28,679	30,347	27,660	24,356	24,191	25,101
% Change (vs base year)	-	+5.8%	-3.6%	-15.1%	-15.7%	-12.5%
FY2013 GHG Emissions (adjusted) (1)	-	31,439	32,054	27,907	29,162	31,036
% Change (vs base year)	-	-3.5%	-13.7%	-12.7%	-17.1%	-19.1%

With our current trend, the District is well on the way to exceeding our 15% reduction target.

Well-Being

11. The well-being objective in the strategic plan was to enhance the use of resources and supports to improve the well-being of all learners and staff. Over the life of the plan, the district developed a mental health strategy which was operationalized through annual action plans. Staff training was provided in mental health awareness, mental health literacy, as well as suicide and violence prevention. Professional staff (social workers and psychology staff) participated in additional training in trauma-informed practices and in supporting specific population groups to enhance their consultation with school staff and their direct service to students. Several evidence-based/informed mental health promotion and prevention programs have been piloted and evaluated, some of which involved partnering with community mental health agencies. Professional staff also worked closely with community partners to facilitate access to, through and from care. The District allocated budget dollars to support physical activity and implemented a workplace mental health leadership certificate. A key strategy was to build capacity to increase awareness around promoting mental health and to facilitate access to mental health supports by identifying pathways to care. If we consider training as a key awareness building activity, training related to mental health support was provided to staff in 147 sites.

In addition, there were a number of areas with targeted provision of mental health supports. For example, the support provided to 502 Syrian newcomer students in 2015-2016 represented a key piece of work completed. Supports for these students included working closely with community partners to ensure a smooth transition for all newcomers into both schools and the community, as well as programs for sharing information (e.g., police/fire safety workshops, orientation sessions, information on

winter in Canada) and recreational activities (soccer, choir, storytelling, etc. Training was provided from Learning Support Services in welcoming newcomer students.

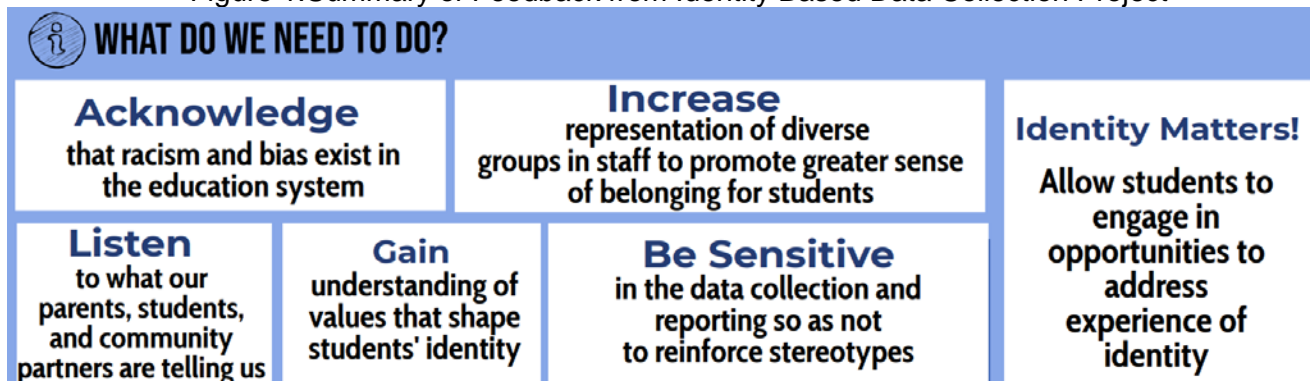
The School Climate data shows evidence of progress in some areas of student well-being, such as increasing *self-efficacy in math*, and *physical activity*, and *positive relationships*, on par or above the Canadian norm. However, there has also been a decline in performance on a number of other indicators, i.e. *sense of belonging*, *positive learning climate*, and *expectations for success*, *student suspensions and absence rates*. Sustained supports should be implemented to address absenteeism and the declining numbers on several of the well-being indicators. Further exploration of these indicators would be a useful first step in understanding the root causes to address these areas of challenge.

In terms of staff well-being, the District has been able to put a comprehensive plan in place to address barriers to employee well-being. However, rising sick leave usage demonstrates the importance of continuing to engage collaboratively with employees to plan, develop and implement programs and initiatives that will support and promote employee engagement and personal well-being, as well as to mitigate against negative workplace factors.

Implications for the New Plan: 2019-2023

12. Much has been learned through the implementation of and reflection on the 2015-2019 strategic plan, which helped to shape the development of the 2019-2023 plan. This learning will help guide our work as we move into the next plan. *Capacity building, student voice, community partnerships*, as in the last plan are key elements of the goals, strategies and outcomes the District will implement and work towards over the next four (4) years. In light of gains in those areas, there is continuity between both plans. Of note is the feedback obtained through the early stages of engagement on identity-based data collection. Figure 1 below shows important lessons learned that would be useful to guide the District's future actions in furtherance of its commitment to equity.

Figure 1. Summary of Feedback from Identity Based Data Collection Project



The measurement and reporting structure for progress on the strategic objectives has evolved significantly over the past few years and has led to valuable discussions among the Board. Many of these discussions have focused on the importance of the specific goals, strategies, and performance indicators to move the work forward and the measurement limitations of the last plan. This is reflected in the inclusion of desired outcomes and key performance indicators in the 2019-2023 strategic plan. It

will be important to focus on these elements so as to be able to recognize, assess and communicate achievements to stakeholders.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

13. Existing District resources support the monitoring and measurement of the strategic plan and support the implementation of strategic initiatives. As such, the District is able to undertake the measurement and reporting of progress within established departmental budgets. These reports are then used to help inform meaningful investments in the future. However, the delay in delivery of the last set of measurement reports presents not just a resource allocation issue but also identify a possible need to adjust expectations. Additionally, reporting of progress has been done within an existing structure. A new reporting structure for the 2019-2023 Plan would require consideration of its resource implications.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

14. Progress on the strategic objectives has been shared and will continue to be shared with the community through regular reporting. This includes annual measurement reports on each strategic objective, as well as an overview each fall in the Director's Annual Report to the community. The information outlined in this report is a consolidation of that evidence, and will be posted to the District website. Additionally, evidence of practice conversations at the Board are a new model of reporting going forward.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

15. This overview identifies key accomplishments, evidence of progress, and opportunities for growth under the last strategic plan. Now in the first year of a new plan, the information included in this report helps us capture lessons learned, as well as information to develop a framework for assessing our progress for the next 4 years.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

The following questions are provided to support the discussion of this item by the Board:

- Does the evidence show progress in each of the identified areas?
- How will this information inform our thinking about measuring success in the next strategic plan?
- What lessons can be learned from the implementation of this plan that would improve our capacity for multi-year planning going forward?

Michele Giroux
Executive Officer, Corporate Services

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Progress on Equity
Appendix B: Progress on Engagement
Appendix C: Progress on Stewardship
Appendix D: Progress on Well-Being