



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Trustees Present: Rob Campbell, Lyra Evans, Wendy Hough (electronic communication), Jennifer Jennekens, Keith Penny, Sandra Schwartz, Lynn Scott, Ganaaboute Gagne (Student Trustee), Prasith Wijeweera (Student Trustee)

Staff Present: Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of Human Resources), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Nadia Towaij (Superintendent of Programming and Learning K-12), Petra Duschner (Manager of Mental Health and Critical Services), Karyn Carty Ostafichuk (Manager of Planning), Jane Alexander, Jennifer Offord, and Brent Smith (System Principals, Program and Learning), Dan Bradley (Manager of Facilities), Jody Alexander (System Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education), Rebecca Mason, (Communications Coordinator), John MacKinnon (Audio-Visual Technician), Nicole Guthrie (Manager, Board Services), Sue Baker (Acting Senior Board Coordinator),

Non-Voting Representatives Present: Cathy Bailey (OSSTF Teachers/Occasional Teachers), Rupi Bergamin (OCSSAN Alternate), Harvey Brown (ACE), Christine Lanos (OCEOC), Christine Moulaison (OCASC), Wajid Zaman (Student Senate);

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

Vice-Chair Penny called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. He 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.

Trustee Lyra Evans requested that agenda item 7.2, Report 20-011, Supporting Indigenous Learners at the OCDSB be moved to follow item 5, Delegations,

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

Carried

3. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Chair Scott advised that it is Kindergarten Registration Week. She encouraged parents to participate in information sessions being held at schools across the city. Parents can register their child anytime. More details are available on the District's website.

Chair Scott advised that the Board is seeking candidates to apply for the position of Public School Trustee, to represent Zone 10, Somerset / Kitchissippi. Interested candidates may visit the OCDSB website for more information and how to apply. Signed applications must be received no later than noon on Friday, 31 January 2020.

Chair Scott reported that the provincial government, in preparation for the 2020 Ontario Budget, is seeking public participation in consultations until 11 February 2020.

There are three ways to share views and ideas with the Government of Ontario.

1. Submit feedback through the online survey
2. Attend an in-person session to be held throughout the province
3. Send written submissions (by email or letter mail)

More information is available on the District website.

Chair Scott advised that the Committee of the Whole Budget meeting scheduled for Monday, 3 February has been rescheduled and will now follow the Committee of the Whole Public session on Tuesday, 4 February 2020.

Chair Scott reported that both the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) have held one-day walkouts which have closed schools across the District. Based on information provided by OSSTF, the Board does not expect any additional walkouts affecting secondary schools during the exam period. Both federations have escalated "work to rule" service withdrawals, which will have an impact on elementary and secondary schools. More information can be found on the District's website. Due to these service withdrawals, the OCDSB will not be participating in the January EQAO Grade 9 math assessments and will await further direction from the Ministry of Education regarding the test for Semester 1 students.

Chair Scott asked the Board to take a moment to reflect on the tragedy of Flight 752, which occurred earlier this month. This event brought Canadians together in grief as we learned about those lost, including members of the OCDSB community. On behalf of the Board, Chair Scott extended the Board's sincere condolences to the family and friends of those who died.

4. Briefing from the Director

Associate Director Reynolds advised that on 30 January 2020, the District will host an Early Learning Career Fair at Rockcliffe Park Public School. Early childhood educators and Early Learning assistants are encouraged to attend and learn about programs and the District's work environment. Participants may bring their resume and take part in on-site interviews. Further details are available on the District's website.

Associate Director Reynolds advised that registration for the winter 2020 night school session has started. Classes run from 20 February to 26 May 2020. Interested students can visit the District's website for more information about registration and a listing of courses available.

5. Delegations

5.1 Maxine Adwella, Mental Health Strategy

Maxine Adwella cancelled her delegation for this meeting.

5.2 Chow Rees, Parent

Chow Rees advised that her daughter is a grade five student at Huntley Centennial Public School who previously attended a congregated gifted class in the Simcoe County District School Board. The family has recently moved to Ottawa and was advised by the school that testing would need to be repeated. Ms. Rees requested that the District recognize Simcoe County's testing results and place her daughter in a congregated gifted class.

In response to queries, Ms. Rees advised that the curriculum in her daughter's gifted class at Simcoe County was different than that provided at Huntley Centennial Public School. Superintendent Symmonds advised that the District generally accepts the results of testing that is compatible with Canadian norms.

6. Matters for Action:

6.1 Report 20-009, Facilities Renewal Program and School Condition Improvement 2019-2020 Project Plan

Your Committee had before it Report 20-009 seeking Board approval of the Facilities Renewal Program (FRP) to be implemented under the School Renewal Allocation (SRA), temporary accommodations (portable moves), and School Condition Improvement (SCI) funding for the 2019-2020 budget year.

Managers Ostafichuk and Bradley highlighted the following points:

- The Board has approved, as part of the total OCDSB operating budget, the School Renewal Allocation (SRA) 2019-2020 budget in the amount of \$15,315,128 which is equal to the estimated SRA grant;
- The 2018-2019 SRA carry forward from the previous fiscal year is \$54,741;
- The Temporary Accommodations Allocation (portable moves) for 2019-2020 is \$3,000,000;
- The Facilities Renewal Program Budget for 2019-2020 is \$18,369,869;
- The 2019-2020 allocation of capital renewal funding for School Condition Improvement (SCI) is \$51,032,412;
- The 2018-2019 SCI carry forward from the previous fiscal year is \$25,982,257;
- The total School Condition Improvement budget for 2019-2020 is \$77,014,669; and
- The total combined Facilities Renewal Program and School Condition Improvement budget for the 2019-2020 year is \$95,384,538.

Manager Bradley, advised that the proposed work includes the science lab and learning commons refurbishments which are part of a multi year program to enhance learning spaces. Other work includes the installation of three to five barrier free washrooms, door, window and roof replacements, paving, and mechanical and lighting upgrades.

Moved by Trustee Schwartz,

- A. THAT the Facilities Renewal Program and School Condition Improvement Project budget in the amount of \$95,384,538 be approved as detailed in Appendix B of Report 20-009;
- B. THAT staff be authorized to proceed with individual project tenders within the Facilities Renewal Program and School Condition Improvement Project plans;
- C. THAT as projects are tendered, based on bid results, or as priorities change, additional projects may be added or removed to suit the availability of the overall budget and these additional projects will be able to proceed without further approval as long as the total overall FRP/SCI budgets are not exceeded; and
- D. THAT the Chair of the Board and Director of Education are authorized to award contracts above \$500,000 that are within this overall available uncommitted approved budget.

During discussion, the following points were noted:

- Approximately \$30 to \$50 million worth of facilities improvements can reasonably be expected to be completed each summer, given the current staffing model;
- The backlog of work amounts to approximately \$635 million. It is unlikely to decrease at this time given current resources;
- Facilities staff accesses rebate funding for LED lighting through the City of Ottawa and Hydro Ottawa. Rebates are not provided by the province;
- In response to a query from Trustee Schwartz, Manager Bradley advised that surplus energy not used by the school is sold to Ontario Hydro. He agreed to provide further information on payback periods;
- The refurbished science labs include natural gas lines for bunsen burners;
- The natural gas condensing boiler replacements are considerably more energy efficient. Trustee Lyra Evans requested that staff provide information on alternative options for boilers that do not rely on fossil fuels to operate. Managers Bradley and Carty-Ostafichuk advised that electric boilers may not be designed for large facilities such as high schools. They agreed to look into the cost of alternatives that use prototype fuels or electricity to operate; however, it may not be possible to complete the research and have this information available for the Board meeting of 28 January 2020, as requested.
- It was noted that approval of the budget is time sensitive to allow staff to prepare for summer work;
- Trustee Schwartz noted that she supports efforts to reduce the District's environmental footprint; however, the approval of the budget should not be delayed.

Moved by Trustee Schwartz

- A. THAT the Facilities Renewal Program and School Condition Improvement Project budget in the amount of \$95,384,538 be approved as detailed in Appendix B of Report 20-009 (Attached as Appendix A);**
- B. THAT staff be authorized to proceed with individual project tenders within the Facilities Renewal Program and School Condition Improvement Project plans;**
- C. THAT as projects are tendered, based on bid results, or as priorities change, additional projects may be added or removed to suit the availability of the overall budget and these additional**

projects will be able to proceed without further approval as long as the total overall FRP/SCI budgets are not exceeded; and

- D. THAT the Chair of the Board and Director of Education are authorized to award contracts above \$500,000 that are within this overall available uncommitted approved budget.**

Carried

6.2 Report 20-006, Updates to Policy P.137.SCO Concussion Management

Your Committee had before it Report 20-006 seeking approval of the proposed revisions to Policy P.137.SCO Concussion Management in alignment with the updated requirements of the Ministry of Education PPM 158 School Board Policies on Concussion.

Superintendent Towajj and System Principals Alexander, Offord and Smith presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- The District is required to meet the updated requirements by February 2020;
- A video created by the Ontario government with the involvement of the Stringer family to stress the importance of concussion management was shown to the Committee ;
- Many of the Ministry requirements were already embedded in the policy and related procedure prior to revision; and
- The policy and procedure will be readily available to students, parents and staff through student and staff portals on the District's website.

Moved by Trustee Schwartz,

THAT the proposed revisions to P.137.SCO Concussion Management, attached as Appendix B to Report 20-006, be approved.

During discussion, the following points were noted:

- Trustee Schwartz noted that she was pleased to see the evolution and continued improvement of the policy and procedure;
- Trustee Campbell queried whether the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education (OPHEA) guidelines met the standards for risk management. Superintendent Towajj advised the OPHEA guidelines were created as a result of provincial consultation with input from medical experts. The minimum number of people trained includes coaches and trainers. The policy also references training for teachers

to ensure that head injuries on the school yard are recognized and dealt with appropriately;

- Staff consulted with staff in Risk Management and the District's insurance provider, the Ontario School Boards Insurance Exchange (OSBIE), to determine that there is no increase in the risk of liability or litigation for school boards and school staff;
- Trustee Schwartz advised that the Audit Committee regularly tracks reports of slips and falls, the category of risk for concussion, not only for liability risks but also for safety reasons.

Moved by Trustee Schwartz

THAT the proposed revisions to P.137.SCO Concussion Management, attached as Appendix B to Report 20-006, be approved. (Attached as Appendix B)

Carried

6.3 Report 20-014, Minor Revision to Policy P.121.GOV Accessibility

Your Committee had before it Report 20-014 seeking approval for a minor revision to Policy P.121.GOV Accessibility, in compliance with the newly issued Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No.163 School Board Policies on Service Animals.

Executive Officer Giroux advised that there are a number of procedures under Policy P.121.GOV Accessibility, including a procedure for service animals. The amendment to the policy is to revise the definition of service animal as directed in PPM 163.

Trustee Campbell expressed concern about non-dog animals being allowed only in extraordinary circumstances and that any distinctions between service animals should be included in the policy. He noted that he may bring an amendment to the recommendation to include objective measures.

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT the proposed change to Policy P.121.GOV Accessibility, attached as Appendix B to report 20-014, be approved.

During discussion, the following points were noted:

- Trustee Jennekens suggested that the word "urban" be removed from section 2.10 as the District has some schools in rural areas; and

- Executive Officer Giroux noted that, while unintentional, the language in the policy is preferential to dogs as there is more infrastructure in place for dogs to be trained as service animals.

Moved by Trustee Campbell

THAT the proposed change to Policy P.121.GOV Accessibility, attached as Appendix B to report 20-014, be approved. (Attached as Appendix C)

Carried

7. Matters for Discussion:

7.1 Report 19-112, Mental Health Strategy 2019-2020

Your Committee had before it Report 19-112 presenting the OCDSB Mental Health Strategy 2019-2022 for discussion.

Superintendent Symmonds and Manager Duschner presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- The Mental Health Strategy will guide work to support student mental health for the next three years. It represents the culmination of a literature review, provincial and local mental health data, and input from the Board's advisory committees;
- The Ministry of Education identifies the areas of focus and the Mental Health Strategy is aligned with the Board's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan;
- Each of the cultures of innovation, caring and social responsibility includes goals and strategies for mental health; and
- Key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to monitor progress through annual reporting for the District's strategic plan, annual action plans developed from the Mental Health Strategy, data from school learning plans, staff professional development, and student surveys.

Trustee Scott assumed the Chair when Trustee Penny wished to speak.

During discussion of the report, the following points were noted:

- Trustee Lyra Evans noted an increasing trend of anxiety in children and queried how it is being addressed. Dr. Duschner advised that, at the foundation level, children are learning how to identify their emotions and self-regulation. The District works with community partners to assess and treat mental health issues. She drew attention to the mental health strategies under the culture of social responsibility with respect to working with community partners;

- In determining which strategies to employ, staff considers gold standards in Canadian research, and the mental health supports available from community partners, as well as input from professional staff with training and experience in research and clinical psychology. Annual action plans will be more specific about strategies to be used;
- Staff continues to be approached by several universities wishing to work with the District on psychotherapeutic approaches;
- Trustee Campbell noted that he would appreciate receiving data on the number of reported violent incidents related to mental health;
- Superintendent Symmonds advised that key performance indicators are a work in progress. They are derived from qualitative data in school surveys and focus groups to assess the success of existing plans and inform the development of a new plan.
- Mental health and mental well-being are synonymous terms. There are other forms of mental well-being, including dysregulated behaviour in younger students. Trustee Campbell suggested establishing a baseline in grade 3;
- A youth advisory group with a diverse range of students would be established to help identify signs, "look-fors" and steps to be taken to support students with mental health issues. The District currently provides suicide prevention, crisis prevention and crisis intervention training for staff that includes "look fors";
- Trustee Scott suggested that the pyramid on page 4 of the Mental Health Strategy be inverted so that the biggest area of focus is the foundation level which would provide mental health knowledge and support, strong safety net and pathways, caring conditions for learning, and social and emotional skills. Dr. Duschner advised that the pyramid was developed by Mental Health Ontario;
- Reaching out to parents includes Speaker Series, workshops and presentations to school councils provided by Learning Support Services staff. Staff advised they would look into providing written material in other languages and livestreaming presentations to reach more parents;
- Trustee Penny noted that Dr. Stan Kutcher of Dalhousie University provides mental health literacy training and queried whether staff are familiar with his presentations. Dr. Duschner advised that the District focuses on mental health while Dr. Kutcher is a psychiatrist who focuses on mental health literacy;
- In response to a concern expressed by Trustee Lyra Evans regarding the stigmatization of substance abuse, Dr. Duschner advised that the

focus is on prevention and abstinence to discourage young children from abusing drugs. Older students are referred to Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services and Ottawa Public Health for intervention, if required;

- Trustee Campbell suggested that the KPIs be further developed to demonstrate the desired outcome and identify whether change has occurred as a result of mental health strategies. Dr. Duschner advised that surveys are conducted following staff training to determine what they learned with respect to academic achievement. She added that it is difficult to determine whether a particular strategy was solely responsible for an increase in academic achievement. Annual action plans include success indicators and strategies;
- Trustee Schwartz noted the importance of educators acquiring skills and knowledge to recognize mental health issues at earlier stages;
- The term "income insecurity" refers to living in poverty and includes homelessness;
- The impact of excessive screen time on students' mental health is a factor. Staff is looking at how to build knowledge about the impact of excessive screen time;
- With respect to wait lists for evaluations, Dr. Duschner advised that wait lists for mental health evaluations do not include psychoeducational evaluations for program reasons. Wait lists for mental health assessments are relatively short in the Ottawa area. Assessments are undertaken immediately for any student contemplating suicide. It is difficult to know how long a student would wait for long term counselling services and it would depend on the family circumstances. Students between the ages of 12 and 19 are eligible for counselling at the Youth Services Bureau where they are either helped immediately or referred. The District provides psychological services for all schools and allow community partners to visit schools to provide services. Most psychotherapeutic approaches are short term.

Trustee Penny thanked staff for their work.

7.2 Report 20-011, Supporting Indigenous Learners at the OCDSB

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting following item 5, Delegations.

Your Committee had before it Report 20-011 providing an annual report for the 2018-2019 school year with respect to Indigenous education within the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB).

Superintendent Baker and Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education, Jody Alexander presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- Staff across the District are on a continuum of learning with respect to Indigenous education;
- The District's Indigenous Education Team supports teachers through awareness training to implementation of Indigenous pedagogy in their everyday teaching; and
- An Indigenous Student Success Coordinator was added to the team in 2018-2019. Along with the Re-Engagement Coordinator, the team with community partners to provide opportunities for Indigenous students to meet monthly, receive support, build advocacy skills, and provide input to the Indigenous Education Learning Team.

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

- With respect to the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) mathematics assessment, achievement gaps were greatest for students in grade 6 for this year. This represents a small cohort issue rather than a systemic issue;
- The Inuit Elder's Language Circle is a Ministry of Education initiative to allow fluent Inuktitut speakers to be recommended to the Ontario College of Teachers (OTC) for teaching certification. This will provide opportunities for the OCDSB to hire Inuktitut language teachers;
- The OCDSB Continuing Education Saturday morning classes would not require OTC certification if Indigenous languages were to be offered;
- The District will work with the Ottawa Catholic School Board to establish a similar Algonquin Elder's Circle to vet Algonquin language speakers to teach in the OCDSB;
- The data used in the Trustee Professional Development session on 14 January 2020 represented a small number of Indigenous students. Segmenting the data further to determine program trends could create serious fluctuations in data;
- The Indigenous Education Advisory Council and Original Voices Youth Circles allow the District to hear the voices of Indigenous students from across the District, families and community partners. For example, two students learned about and applied to the Indigenous Support Program at Carleton University;
- The numbers of Indigenous students are not yet reported by the First Nation, Metis or Inuit group to which they belong. The Indigenous

Education Team recognizes the differences and unique characteristics for each group and the Indigenous Youth Symposium and professional development for teachers honour the identities of various students;

- Ministry funding is used to offer native language and native studies courses. A per-pupil amount is also provided. A list of the grants can be found in Appendix C of Report 20-011;
- Native studies courses are available in 16 of 24 secondary sites. The goal for full implementation in all sites is September 2021; and
- The District partners with coterminus Boards for many events and supports, including the Inuit Elder Circle.

Committee members expressed appreciation to the Indigenous Education Team for their report and for the work they are doing for Indigenous students.

8. Information Items:

8.1 Report from OPSBA (if required)

There was no report from the OPSBA representatives.

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 - January - March 2020

The long range agendas for January to March 2020 were provided for information.

10. New Business - Information and Inquiries

Trustee Scott advised that there are opportunities to provide input to the Ontario budget, either by making a submission to the Ministry or to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA). Trustee Scott requested all trustees to identify their top three priorities for education funding as soon as possible so that the Board may approve a submission at the 28 January 2020 Board meeting. She advised that Board Services will circulate a chart of priorities that were suggested by the Advocacy Strategy Committee at its last meeting for trustees' consideration.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 p.m.

Keith Penny, Chair