

MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 20-026

TO: Trustees

Student Trustees

Special Education Advisory Committee

FROM: Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board

Peter Symmonds, Superintendent of Learning Support Services

DATE: 6 March 2020

RE: Learning Support Services Operational Review Update

Purpose:

This memorandum provides an update to Trustees regarding the motion passed by Board on 30 October 2018:

THAT staff be directed to undertake an operational review of the process for identification, needs assessment (including the use of tiered interventions as a support for all students, and as identification and placement evidence), and placement for all exceptionalities.

Progress:

In order to objectively and efficiently accomplish the review, the District has contracted external consultants. As outlined in Report Number 19-031, Learning Support Services Operational Review of the Process for Identification, Needs Assessment and Placement, the Special Education Advisory Committee worked with Learning Support Services (LSS) staff to establish a scope of work to inform the Request for Service process. In January 2020 the contract was awarded to the successful proponent, Optimus SBR.

Working with the team from Optimus SBR, the project plan including methodology and timelines was developed. Key milestones and deliverables were planned as follows:

| Activity | Timelines |
|--|---------------|
| Project Launch & Discovery | February 2020 |
| Kick-off meeting | |
| Draft project plan | |
| Discovery interviews | |
| Finalize project plan | |
| Submit discovery documents | |

| Draft research & engagement plan | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Finalize research & engagement plan | |
| Current State Assessment | Cobrugat to April |
| Current State Assessment | February to April 2020 |
| Data & document review | |
| Survey development | |
| Conduct Focus Groups | 30 March to 3 |
| Board of Trustees | April |
| ○ SEAC | |
| Professional Support Staff | |
| Principals/Vice-principals | |
| Elementary teachers (classroom teachers, LSTs, LSCs) | |
| Secondary teachers (classroom teachers, LSTs, LSCs) | |
| o Parents | |
| Students | |
| Jurisdictional interviews | 14 to 17 April |
| Toronto District School Board | 2020 |
| York Region District School Board | |
| Durham District School Board | |
| Thames Valley District School Board | |
| Halton District School Board | |
| Launch parent survey | 30 March 2020 |
| OCDSB validation interviews | 22 April 2020 |
| Draft Current State Report | 28 April 2020 |
| Discussion | |
| ○ Feedback | |
| Present to SEAC | 13 May 2020 |
| Recommendation & Final Report Development | 26 May to 8 July |
| | 2020 |
| Project Closeout & Knowledge Transfer | |
| Presentation to SEAC | September |
| Presentation to Board | |

Impact of the Labour Action:

A series of 11 focus groups with stakeholders were scheduled for the week of 30 March 2020. Due to current labour sanctions, focus groups with staff cannot proceed at this time. In order to maintain the integrity of the engagement and to ensure timely feedback regarding the outcome of the consultation, it was decided to pause all planned focus groups until such time that all stakeholder groups could be engaged. Each phase of the review builds on the information gathered from the previous activity. Delayed focus groups will extend the timelines associated with the review overall.

Next Steps:

Revised timelines will be communicated when the review resumes. LSS and the team at Optimus SBR continue the preparatory work associated with each activity planned for the Current State Assessment (e.g., parent survey). Importantly, sufficient notice to stakeholders will be considered in the revised timelines in order to facilitate participation in

the operational review. In addition, engagement and feedback to trustees and SEAC will be coordinated with existing meeting schedules where possible.

Upon receipt of the Final Report, staff will develop an action plan to guide the implementation phase.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Peter Symmonds at peter.symmonds@ocdsb.ca

cc Senior Staff
Manager Board Services
Corporate Records