

Ottawa Carleton District School Board
Board of Trustees Board Meeting - Tuesday, March 31, 2020
Public Delegation Statement

I, Ashley Russell, would like to give a public delegation to the Board of Trustees Board meeting because I am concerned that Trustee Donna Blackburn overstepped her role as Trustee on Saturday, March 28th, and for this behaviour I would like to request that she be sanctioned and put on leave without pay immediately.

I first heard of the incident on the chat of the Ottawa Black Educators Network (to which I am a member of). A member shared that her nephew, Styles Lepage, was not only targeted and bullied that Saturday by Donna Blackburn, but Blackburn took LePage's picture without his consent, and posted about her interaction with LePage on her Facebook (which has now been deleted) [see Attachment 1].

I read further about the matter in yesterday's (March 29th) *Basketball News* article [see attachment 3]. From Blackburn's other Facebook post [see Attachment 2] it is undeniable that her behaviour is reprehensible. She chose to target LePage, and used her position to bully and threaten LePage, who was playing basketball and walking his dog alone in the park that day; practising physical (social) distancing.

Basketball News further reported that Blackburn went so far as to reach out to Susan Carkner, the Assistant to Councillor of the City of Ottawa, to have the hoops removed immediately from the basketball court. Donna Blackburn also threatened to have LePage kicked off of the Longfields SS senior boys basketball team and told him she would show up to his graduation ceremony and trip him as he crossed the stage. "This is somebody who can pull strings within the school board and can potentially do something to damage my son's education." "Oh you're graduating? If you are, I will be at the graduation ceremony and I will trip you before you get your diploma" (March 29th, 2020, Basketball News article).

I am concerned that Trustee Blackburn's actions towards this student have unbridle the trust that the public can have in our Trustees at the OCDSB. I am concerned that Blackburn cannot treat students respectfully and fairly. As this is not the first time Blackburn has displayed racist behaviour publicly. According to the Basketball Buzz article, "in 2016 Blackburn found herself apologizing for racial remarks she made towards her own colleague after she adopted two young daughters from Guyana. Moreover, Blackburn was previously sanctioned by the OCDSB in 2018 for code of conduct accusations." I am concerned that Donna Blackburn has not learned to respect

people of colour, since her previous sanctures. All students in Ottawa deserve to feel safe and respected, whether at school or at play.

Therefore, I would like to request that the Board of Trustees sanction Donna Blackburn for her reprehensible behaviour of Saturday, March 28, 202 and put her on leave immediately without pay.

Thank you.

Ashley Russell

Attachment 1

9:24 



✕ Donna Blackburn



Donna Blackburn



3 hrs • 

So I had to go to the drugstore for an essential and then bought deodorant. I am sure my pets love me no matter what I may smell like. When I got home people playing basketball in the park. Went over to politely ask them to leave, kid gave me attitude and played dumb. Then I said, parlez-vous francais? Yeh kid I can argue in both official languages!!!!



 26



Lorrain Deszcz

I saw teenagers playing basketball as well near my place . How are they not getting the message. So frustrating.

3h Like Reply



Laura Halkai Lorrain Deszcz Ry and Ev are s...



Sherri Iona Lorrain Deszcz they aren't wipin...



Sue Veaudry

I know. I saw kids and parents in my park not social/physical distancing !!! Made me feel sick. Pay attention people !!!!



Write a comment...



Attachment 2

Koodo

7:07 PM

95%



Donna Blackburn

27 mins · 2



Apparently I have another title Park Patrol. This kid has been playing for over an hour and won't leave. I have called by-law and will stand here until they come. I will follow the kid home if I have to. See why you elected me Trustee, I never give up. I will keep my community safe and this kid needs to learn to follow the rules!! Kid went to St.Paul's.

