



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

**Tuesday, September 15, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting**

- Trustees Present:** Justine Bell, Christine Boothby, Rob Campbell, Chris Ellis, Lyra Evans, Mark Fisher, Wendy Hough, Jennifer Jennekens, Keith Penny, Sandra Schwartz, Lynn Scott, Charles Chen (Student Trustee), Joy Liu (Student Trustee)
- Staff Present:** Camille Williams-Taylor (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Mike Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of Human Resources), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Prince Duah (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Eric Hardie (Superintendent of Instruction), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Colin Anderson (System Principal, Safe Schools), Christine Kessler (System Principal, Learning Support Services), Petra Duschner (Manager of Mental Health and Critical Services), Karyn Carty Ostafichuk (Manager of Planning), Sandra Owens (Manager of Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications & Information Services), Stacey Kay (Manager of Learning Support Services), Amy Hannah (System Principal, Learning Support Services), Richard Sinclair (Manager of Legal Services and Labour Relations), Nicole Guthrie (Manager of Board Services), Julie Cyr (Manager, Extended Day and Child Care Programs), Michael Guilbault (AV Technician), Rebecca Grandis (Senior Board Coordinator), Darren Gatley (Committee Coordinator), Sue Baker (recording),
- Non-Voting Representatives Present:** Kelly Granum (OSSTF - Occasional Teachers), Stephanie Kirkey, (OSSTF-Teachers), Christine Lanos (OCEOC), Brian Lesage (ETFO Alternate), Christine Moulaison (OCASC), Steven Spidell (OCSSAN Alternate), Susan Gardner (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers Association), Melodie Gondek (OSSTF - ESP), Troy Cluff (OSSTF-PSSP), David Wildman (OCEOTA)

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

Vice-Chair Penny called the meeting to order at 7:06 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 Boothby,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Trustee Scott paid tribute to entrepreneur and philanthropist Dave Smith, who passed away last week at age 87. She noted that Dave cared about the welfare and well-being of OCDSB youth. Dave was a tireless fundraiser for the Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre to serve youth struggling with drug and alcohol issues, and many other causes supporting at-risk youth. On behalf of the Board, Chair Scott thanked him for his long service on the board of the Ottawa Education Foundation and his ongoing support for OCDSB students.

Chair Scott advised that the Board is seeking two community members with financial expertise and business knowledge to serve on the Audit Committee. Appointments are effective 1 December 2020. One term will be for two years and the other for three years. The deadline to apply is 2 October 2020. Further information is available on the District's website.

Chair Scott extended best wishes to all the Jewish families in the community who are celebrating the Jewish New Year Rosh Hashanah later this week and observing Yom Kippur at the end of the month.

4. Briefing from the Director

Director Williams-Taylor advised that OCDSB students and staff will be participating in Orange Shirt Day on 30 September 2020. Orange Shirt Day is a movement across Canada helping to educate students and communities on the history and legacy of Canadian Residential Schools. The District has asked educators to plan learning activities regarding this topic. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation will also be hosting a virtual event for students in Grades 5 to 12 to hear from survivors and discuss these issues.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that social media expert and IT professional Paul Davis will be providing free webinars for students in Grades 4 to 12 to discuss internet safety. No registration is required. Further information is available on the District's website.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that the last Wednesday of September has been designated as Rowan's Law Day to help raise awareness about concussion safety. Earlier this year, the OCDSB revised its concussion management policy. The District's website contains useful information to learn more about the signs and symptoms and what to do if you suspect a concussion. While sports may be limited at this time, it's important to remember that we need to take any head injury seriously.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. COVID-19 Update

Director Williams-Taylor advised that the COVID-19 update will be in the form of a presentation by members of senior staff with a focus on community engagement to keep schools safe. (Note: Please refer to items 6.1 to 6.5 for specific information on human resources, finance, return to school, outbreak management, and transportation.)

The District recognizes the importance of communication with staff, trustees and the public. The Communications team will provide newsletters, social media analyses, sample letters for principals, videos, webinars, and an "It Takes a Community" advertising campaign to share information.

During the question and answer period, the following points were noted:

- Communications with the public should reflect that some schools (i.e., Colonel By Secondary School) do not follow the "quadmester" model of organization;
- 22 percent of students have selected the virtual learning option;
- staff continues to verify approximately 1,000 technical adjustments for virtual enrolment, and actions, where possible, requests for changes;
- the window for requesting changes to/from in-class to virtual learning is closing. Every effort is being made to accommodate schools in the location for which they have registered. Requests for changes may be possible at the end of each semester or quadmester;
- the need for human and financial resources affects the District's ability to reduce class sizes;
- kindergarten classes have two educators who are encouraged to create pods within the class to make smaller groups;
- the average size of primary classes is 22, and 90 percent of primary classes are at 20 students or less;

- intermediate/junior classes have been in the low 30s in the past; however, this year classes are well below that and, in some cases, in the high 20s;
- there is no hard cap on the size of virtual classes, but they are well below 50 students per class;
- reductions in class size are focused on communities where COVID-19 transmission is highest and in schools identified in the RAISE index, subject to the availability of resources;
- secondary occasional teachers are concerned about equity in virtual classes. Students in school are not required to supply their own art materials and other supplies; while remote students may not be able to supply their own materials. Staff advised that they are seeking advice from teachers and investigating the feasibility of sending supplies to remote students;
- elementary teachers are opposed to the hybrid model for specialized program classes, particularly for parents who work from home while supporting their children's online school work;
- enrolment in specialized program classes may be limited to 8 students, two of whom may be receiving virtual learning. Every attempt was made to minimize transitions for these students and group them with educators who know them best. Learning Support Services (LSS) will provide support, where needed;
- secondary teachers are concerned that virtual students with differing exceptionalities in specialized program classes would not receive the same level of attention as students who opted for in-school learning;
- LSS is working with Business & Learning Technologies (B<) to add additional layers of support for students accessing remote learning. Learning support teachers will provide guidelines and best practices;
- The Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) invites virtual schools to reach out for assistance in organizing their school councils;
- parents wishing an exemption from the requirement for mask wearing for their children in grades 4-12 must apply for an exemption, similar to any negotiation for human rights on the grounds of disability. An application form and guidelines will be released on 16 September 2020. Non-compliance will be dealt with through strategies to support mask wearing to progressive discipline or exclusion;
- OSTA understands the urgency of providing safe and regulatory compliant transportation to all qualified students, and OSTA will determine if taxi service is advisable;
- to ensure safety, teachers who move between classes will have appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and control the space between themselves and their students;

- occasional teachers who did not receive their teaching assignment until late last week and who have not received any professional development or time to prepare for their classes, are expected to receive training and support from their school principal or online through the staff portal or B< training modules;
- staff are aware of the added workload for custodians to maintain safety;
- additional custodial positions are currently being posted and filled in accordance with the requirements of the collective agreement;
- students who are home sick will receive support from their regular classroom teacher. They will not be able to change cohorts;
- parents who refuse to allow their children to attend in school classes because of large class sizes may opt for virtual learning or e-learning;
- home schooling is available to all families in Ontario. If home schooling is selected, the student is removed from the public school structure and parents must do the teaching;
- virtual schools will be assigned a school board identification number;
- staff has not yet had an opportunity to address grandfathering for siblings, student councils or extra-curricular activities for virtual schools;
- Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLOs) and Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) are providing translation, interpretation, and follow-up services to families whose first language is not English;
- Trustee Campbell requested information on the District's financial exposure if registration for the Extended Day Program remains low;
- liaison between remote schools and school councils will be addressed through the Google Meets platform and at the next Parent Involvement Committee meeting. Internet access will be addressed on an as needed basis;
- principals will monitor remote learning and extra support requirements for teachers, if required. Learning Support Consultants will be in schools to identify areas of support that are needed;
- Trustee Boothby requested an update at the next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee on extra supports available for remote learning;
- Students enrolled in alternate programs or supervised alternative learning will continue to receive coaching and other supports that have been provided in the past; and

- the Storefront program is still operating at this point; however, students are not going to workplaces at this time. Staff will monitor and take advice from OPH.

6.1 Human Resources

Superintendent of Human Resources McCoy reported that schools were organized based on student enrolment as of 31 August 2020. September enrolment was estimated using spring enrolment and staffing projections, Ministry guidelines, and a confirmation survey sent to parents in August. Projected class size averages and actual in-person class size averages are lower than Ministry requirements. Every effort was made to be accurate; however, some adjustments may be required. It was determined that in-person class sizes would be lower than virtual class sizes because of health and safety concerns. Additional staffing was provided through extra funding from the Ministry of Education and the federal government. Over the next week, enrolment will be confirmed and any necessary school reorganizations will take place.

Director Williams-Taylor noted that seven principals and ten vice-principals are required to lead the seven new virtual schools, and over 700 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) teaching positions are needed. Most staffing assignments have been completed, and change requests are under consideration.

Over 1,000 staff requests for accommodation have been approved or under review.

Director Williams-Taylor recognized that the workload implications on all central and school staff have been significant and unprecedented.

Most recently, skids of PPE have been received and are regularly distributed to schools.

6.2 Finance

There was no COVID-19 financial update.

6.3 Return to School

Director Williams-Taylor noted that the first day of school for most elementary students was Monday, 14 September 2020. Schools have gone to great lengths to ensure parents are informed and students receive an orientation to the new structure in their school and safety protocols. Guidelines are posted inside and outside the school to control entrance and exit, and coordinate movement in school. Parents are asked to not enter the school unless absolutely necessary. Staff recognizes that some classes are larger than expected and some parents have concerns about physical distancing. The final enrolment count has not yet taken place.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that secondary students began school last week and, due to the significant effort of educators to engage students, the students understood the protocol upon entry to the school and class. Secondary classes were divided alphabetically into cohorts A and B to average 15 students per class attending on alternate days. Students at Sir Guy Carleton, Ottawa Technical High School, Alternate Schools, and Safe Schools classes follow a modified version of this schedule. Class sizes are monitored and, where the split is uneven, mitigating where necessary.

Ottawa-Carleton Virtual (OCV) for 17,000 students across the District will be the last cohort to launch on 18 September 2020. There will be six elementary campuses, one per superintendent of instruction, and one secondary campus. Superintendents Lehman and Hardie have organized the virtual school and the majority of virtual teaching staff received their assignments over the past weekend. There are still some student transfer requests to be considered this week.

With respect to students with special education needs, Superintendent Symmonds advised that all students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be supported by their regular classroom teacher, both in-school and virtually. Students in specialized program classes will follow a hybrid model combining in person and virtual learning. LSS has developed a system to connect the special education class educator team with the student's family, and in some cases, have augmented support for remote learning.

The District's Extended Day Program (EDP) commenced on 14 September 2020. Registration is currently 50 percent relative to last year at this time. Protocols for cleaning EDP spaces are different from school spaces and staff is working with Ottawa Public Health (OPC) on developing protocols.

Executive Officer Giroux advised that school councils have yet to be organized for virtual schools. All school council meetings will be virtual through the use of the Google Meets platform. Elections for school council positions must be held by 14 October 2020. There are some complexities with respect to insurance for school councils and this issue will be discussed by the Parent Involvement Committee at its meeting on 21 September 2020. Additional information will be available through the School Council Newsletter which will resume publication this week.

6.4 Outbreak Management

Director Williams-Taylor noted that health and safety training has been a priority for professional development at the start of the school year. OPH is currently in the process of hiring nurses to support school safety and set up isolation rooms in schools. All schools have received personal PPE for September and October. Students in grades 4-12 must wear a mask to

school or obtain a disposable mask at school if they do not have their own mask. Enhanced PPE will be provided where staff is in close contact with students with medical needs.

Parents and students are urged to conduct a daily self-assessment prior to attending school or work and to stay home if unwell. Staff is working with community partners to reach out and engage families, where necessary.

OPH defines an outbreak as two or more cases in one school which are related to the school. Individuals with symptoms and without a negative test result, or have another diagnosis, are required to self-isolate for 14 days. OPH will provide "Do Not Attend" lists for staff and students who have tested positive and are symptomatic. If a positive case is found in a school, all parents are advised. The Ministry requires daily reporting for absences and confirmed cases. A flow-chart is available on the District's website outlining steps to be followed until the case is resolved. An "OCDSB COVID-19 Dashboard" will also be posted on the website to advise on the number of student and staff cases, and classes and/or schools closed.

6.5 Transportation

A memo from the Ottawa School Transportation Authority was provided for information. The memo outlined the status of student transportation as of 14 September 2020.

Routes were given to operators for distribution to drivers on August 28, 2020, almost one month later than usual, due to the numerous scheduling changes that took place throughout August. On 4 September the Parent Portal was opened. By Tuesday September 8, it became apparent that operators would not have enough drivers to cover all yellow bus routes. On 11 September 2020, OSTA announced and posted that 37 routes were cancelled due to driver shortage. In some cases only morning or only afternoon portions were cancelled, or both.

OSTA's first priority is student safety within the system. For this reason, it is important to let the system stabilize before making any other changes. Once the driver pool is confirmed, OSTA will focus on making changes in rural areas where the internet is known to be unreliable and for high needs school communities, as identified by the school boards. As drivers become available, service will be reinstated in other areas.

7. Matters for Action:

7.1 Notice of Motion, Re: Review of Police Involvement in Schools, Trustee Campbell

Notice having been given, Trustee Campbell moved as follows:

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

WHEREAS there is significant public interest in both OCDSB relations with Ottawa Police Services (OPS) and the school system's role in the School-to-Prison pipeline;

WHEREAS the Board is committed to the dismantling of any internal systemic racism and to the urgent building of trust with impacted communities and students;

WHEREAS the Board is committed to re-examining its practices, policies, and outcomes with an equity lens, and this equity focus is an important part of the Board's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan;

WHEREAS none of (i) the nature nor the purpose of the Board's engagement with different sorts of School Resource Officers (SRO), (ii) Policy P.043.SCO Police Involvement in Schools, or (iii) the discretionary OCDSB commitments made in the multilateral protocol governing all Board-Police relations, have been reviewed in several years; and

WHEREAS a review of all of SRO programs, the Board's Policy, and discretionary OCDSB protocol commitments, is timely given that a Board review of its Safe Schools-related policies is already in progress:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

A. THAT the Board Review Policy P.043.SCO Police Involvement in Schools, including

(i) the role or roles of the School Resource Officer (SRO) in OCDSB schools, and

(ii) all OCDSB commitments identified as legally discretionary within the multilateral protocol governing relations between Ottawa Police Services and Ottawa-area school districts.

B. THAT staff bring forward a report with a plan for Board approval no later than the end of October 2020, which includes:

(i) a plan for the overall review of police involvement in OCDSB schools, with milestones;

(ii) internal and external consultation plans, per Policy P.110.GOV; and

(iii) options for the involvement of external academic or other experts, the creation of an advisory panel, and/or the creation of an ad hoc or steering committee.

Trustee Campbell advised that the motion contains some minor amendments proposed by Trustee Scott for clarity. He submitted that, while it is not an opportune time to propose a policy review during the COVID-19 pandemic, staff is currently undergoing a review of safe schools policies and it would be timely to include Policy P.043.SCO Police Involvement in Schools.

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

- Trustee Schwartz requested staff to identify ways, other than focus groups and surveys, to engage students and marginalized and vulnerable groups in the external consultation;
- Trustee Bell requested to "do no harm" when engaging with affected groups and to give more weight to their input;
- Student Trustee Chen requested a non-binding recorded vote for student trustees. Trustee Scott advised that a non-binding recorded vote can be requested if the motion is presented to Board for approval;
- Over 1,300 current and former students have responded to a request from Student Trustees Chen and Liu to indicate their support for a review of the SRO program and an understanding of the diverse experiences students have had with the police; and
- Staff indicated that a report will be presented to Committee of the Whole in mid-October outlining options for the review, including internal and external consultations.

*** The 10:30 vote obtained a two-thirds majority to continue the meeting

Trustee Campbell noted his hope that staff will present options for the involvement of external academic experts as well as for the creation and membership of a steering committee to lead the review.

Trustee Campbell noted that Policy P.110.GOV regarding consultation calls for an informal consultation, where feasible, with stakeholders to obtain their suggestions regarding the proposed timelines, issues and format before finalizing the consultation plans. Director Williams-Taylor advised that it may not be feasible to undertake a pre-consultation with advisory committees prior to presenting a report to the Committee of the Whole on 13 October 2020.

In response to a suggestion from Trustee Lyra Evans that a phone meeting be held for the pre-consultation, Trustee Penny advised that this request would be considered by the Agenda Planning Committee.

Moved by Trustee Campbell,

A. THAT the Board Review Policy P.043.SCO Police Involvement in Schools, including

(i) the role or roles of the School Resource Officer (SRO) in OCDSB schools, and

(ii) all OCDSB commitments identified as legally discretionary within the multilateral protocol governing relations between Ottawa Police Services and Ottawa-area school districts.

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(iii) options for the involvement of external academic or other experts, the creation of an advisory panel, and/or the creation of an ad hoc or steering committee.

Carried

8. Report from Statutory and Other Committees

8.1 ACE, 4 June 2020

Moved by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the Report from the Advisory Committee on Equity dated 4 June 2020 be received.

Carried

8.2 SEAC, 10 June 2020

Moved by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the Report from the Special Education Advisory Committee dated 10 June 2020 be received.

Carried

8.3 IEAC, 25 June 2020

Moved by Trustee Hough,

THAT the Report from the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee dated 25 June 2020 be received.

Trustee Hough requested the sentence on page 8, in the third paragraph, beginning with: "She noted the IBDC questionnaires ..." be amended to read "Superintendent Baker noted the IBDC questionnaires..."

Moved by Trustee Hough,

THAT the Report from the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee dated 25 June 2020 be received, as amended.

Carried

8.4 ACE, 23 July 2020

Moved by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the Report from the Advisory Committee on Equity dated 23 July 2020 be received.

Carried

8.5 SEAC, 19 August 2020

Moved by Trustee Boothby,

THAT the Report from the Special Education Advisory Committee dated 19 August 2020 be received.

Carried

9. Information Items:

9.1 Report from OPSBA (if required)

There was no report from the OPSBA representatives.

9.2 OSTA Update

There was no update from OSTA other than the information provided in agenda item 6.5 Transportation.

9.3 New Ministry Initiatives Update (if required)

Director Williams-Taylor advised that the District received Ministry health and safety guidelines on receiving international students. A report will be presented to the Committee of the Whole in October.

10. New Business - Information and Inquiries

Trustee Scott, on behalf of the Board, expressed sincere appreciation to all staff for their efforts during a very uncertain and difficult time. She added that the Board is very appreciative of all staffs' efforts in support of students and families.

Trustee Penny also expressed appreciation for the District's leadership during the past six months.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Keith Penny, Chair