



BOARD PUBLIC MINUTES

**Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 7:00 pm
Zoom Meeting**

- Trustees:** Justine Bell, Donna Blackburn, Christine Boothby, Rob Campbell, Chris Ellis, Lyra Evans, Mark Fisher, Wendy Hough, Jennifer Jennekens, Keith Penny, Sandra Schwartz, Lynn Scott, Christine Boothby, Joy Liu (Student Trustee), Charles Chen (Student Trustee)
- Staff:** 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), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), 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), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Nadia Towaij (Superintendent of Program and Learning K-12), Richard Sinclair (Manager of Legal Services and Labour Relations), Stacey Kay (Manager of Learning Support Services), Sandy Owens (Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications & Information Services), Nicole Guthrie (Manager of Board Services), Susan Baker (Acting Senior Board Coordinator), Michael Guilbault (AV Technician)

1. Call to Order -- Chair of the Board

Chair Scott called the public meeting to order at 7:53 p.m. She 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 the Agenda

Moved by Trustee Campbell, seconded by Trustee Fisher,
THAT the agenda be approved.

An amendment moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT a new action item be added as item 8.9, Supporting School Councils in 2020-2021.

Carried, friendly

Moved by Trustee Campbell, seconded by Trustee Fisher,

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

Carried

3. Report from the Board (In Camera)

Vice-Chair Penny reported that the Board met in camera earlier this evening and reports and recommends as follows:

Moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Penny,

THAT staff be authorized to proceed, as directed in Board, in camera, with respect to a human resources matter.

Carried

The motion was carried unanimously by those present:

FOR: Trustees Boothby, Blackburn, Ellis, Hough, Campbell, Penny, Lyra Evans, Bell, Fisher, Jennekens, Schwartz, Scott (12)

AGAINST: Nil (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil (0)

4. Briefing from the Chair of the Board

Chair Scott 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. Educators were asked to plan some learning regarding this topic in advance. 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 important issues.

Chair Scott noted that the last Wednesday of each 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 a concussion is suspected. It is important to remember that any head injury must be taken seriously.

5. Briefing from the Director

Director Williams-Taylor advised that, on 16 September 2020, the local Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario membership ratified the tentative settlement reached with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) on 23 July, 2020. Trustees ratified the local collective agreement in August 2020. The new collective agreement will be in force from 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2022. This ratification of the local agreement follows the ratification of the central agreement among the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), the Crown, and the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) in April 2020. In accordance with the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act*, all terms of the central and local agreement are now in force effective 17 September 2020. Staff will implement the terms and conditions of both the central and local collective agreements, which includes adjusting teachers' current salary grids, wage schedules and allowances. The District looks forward to reaching local agreements with other bargaining units.

Director Williams-Taylor noted that the Jewish community will observe Yom Kippur beginning Sunday evening on 27 September and ending in the evening of Monday 28 September 2020. She extended best wishes to all on this occasion.

6. Delegations

6.1 Becky Arajs, Re. School Council Engagement of OVS Parents

Becky Arajs, speaking as the current chair of the Manor Park school council, expressed concern that school councils have not yet received any direct communications from the District with respect to the role of parents wishing to be members of a virtual school council and and/or their child's previous "brick and mortar" school council. She noted that school councils are anxious to hold their elections, meet with the school's administration, and encourage all parents to attend meetings. She urged the Board to make a clear decision at this meeting.

In response to a query from Trustee Ellis, Ms Arajs submitted that it is unclear whether virtual school parents would be permitted to be members, hold office or vote if their child was not currently attending the brick and mortar school.

6.2 James Graham, Re. Wearing of Masks

James Graham submitted that children in kindergarten to grade 3 should not be required to wear masks during the entire school day. He noted the Ottawa Public Health (OPH) has indicated there have been no hospitalizations for young children in Ottawa out of a total of 33 cases for children aged zero to nine. Mr. Graham expressed the opinion that young children wearing masks is unnecessary to protect citizens in our community, it will impact the daily lives of school children and their ability to communicate with teachers and socialize with peers, it is being

proposed without evidential support and is blindsiding parents with a change that directly impacts students without cause or concern.

In response to a query from Trustee Ellis, Mr. Graham indicated that he did not believe masks would be of benefit to young children if physical distancing is not possible. He urged the Board to not change the rules at this time when there is no requirement to do so in the provincial guidelines.

7. COVID 19 Update

Director Williams-Taylor noted the rise in the number of cases in the City of Ottawa and across Ontario. The first case in the OCDSB was identified on 20 September 2020 and the District now reports eight positive cases that have been confirmed by Ottawa Public Health (OPH). Working with the OPH school nurse, high risk contacts have been identified and letters were sent to the school community and high risk contacts were advised to self-isolate for 14 days and get tested. Families are encouraged to have alternate plans in place if they are required to self-isolate. Staff is currently working on staffing strategies to avoid closing schools, wherever possible.

Director Williams-Taylor advised that seven new elementary and secondary virtual schools opened last week and are operational. Staff is currently reconciling wait lists to determine how many students can be placed in schools. Approximately 1,600 students are on the waitlist, and the demand is greater than available space.

8. Matters for Action

8.1 Confirmation of Board Minutes:

8.1.a Board, 22 June 2020

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,

THAT the minutes of the Board meeting dated 22 June 2020 be confirmed.

Trustee Bell noted that her question to student trustees with respect to their support for pausing the School Resource Officer (SRO) program while a review, including consultation with students, was conducted was omitted from the minutes.

Chair Scott requested that the last bullet on page 16 be revised to clarify what was meant.

Chair Scott noted that Glen Cairn Public School was misspelled.

Chair Scott noted that Trustee Penny assumed the Chair for discussion of item 10.9 on 22 June and 23 June 2020.

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Board meeting dated 22 June 2020 be
confirmed, as amended.**

Carried

8.1.b Board, 23 June 2020, Continuation of Board Meeting 22 June 2020

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Continuation Board meeting, dated
23 June 2020, be confirmed.

Trustee Scott noted that Trustee Penny assumed the chair for
discussion of item 10.9.

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Continuation Board meeting, dated 23
June 2020, be confirmed, as amended.**

Carried

8.1.c Special Board, 29 June 2020

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 29 June
2020 be confirmed.

Trustee Bell noted that she questioned the difference between
racial insensitivity and an act of racism on page 214 of 470.

Trustee Bell noted that her comment with respect to "further
investigation into SL" should be revised to read "further
investigation into the credibility of SL was not pursued".

Trustee Bell requested that her comment with respect to "racial
issues" should read "racial insensitivity was not taken into account".

Trustee Scott noted that staff will take these requested revisions
under advisement and consider incorporating them into the
minutes.

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 29 June
2020 be confirmed, as amended.**

Carried

8.1.d Special Board, 9 July 2020

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 9 July
2020 be confirmed.**

Carried

- 8.1.e Special Board, 10 July 2020, Continuation of Special Board Meeting 9 July 2020

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,

THAT the minutes of the Continuation Special Board meeting dated 10 July 2020 be confirmed.

In response to a query from Trustee Bell, Trustee Scott confirmed that Trustee Blackburn was in attendance at the beginning of the meeting.

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Continuation Special Board meeting
dated 10 July 2020 be confirmed.**

Carried

- 8.1.f Special Board, 16 July 2020

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,

**THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 16 July
2020 be confirmed.**

Carried

- 8.1.g Special Board, 21 July 2020

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,

**THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 21 July
2020 be confirmed.**

Carried

- 8.1.h Special Board, 14 August 2020

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,

**THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 14
August 2020 be confirmed.**

Carried

- 8.1.i Special Board, 25 August 2020

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 25
August 2020 be confirmed.**

Carried

8.1.j Special Board, 26 August 2020

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough,
THAT the minutes of the Special Board meeting dated 26
August 2020 be confirmed.**

Carried

8.2 Business Arising from Board Minutes

There was no business arising from all Board and Special Board minutes listed in item 8.1 Confirmation of Board Minutes.

8.3 Receipt of Committee of the Whole Minutes:

8.3.a 15 September 2020

Moved by Trustee Penny, seconded by Trustee Hough,

**THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole meeting, dated
15 September 2020, be received.**

Carried

8.3.a.a Approval of Review of Police Involvement in Schools

Student Trustee Liu requested a non-binding vote for student trustees.

Moved by Trustee Campbell, seconded by Trustee Penny,

**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.

Carried

The non-binding vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

FOR: Trustees Boothby, Blackburn, Hough, Campbell, Ellis, Jennekens, Penny, Lyra Evans, Bell, Fisher, Schwartz, Scott, and Student Trustees Chen and Liu. (14)

AGAINST: Nil (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil (0)

The binding vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

FOR: Trustees Boothby, Blackburn, Hough, Campbell, Ellis, Jennekens, Penny, Lyra Evans, Bell, Fisher, Schwartz, Scott (12)

AGAINST: Nil (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil (0)

8.4 Receipt of Committee of the Whole Budget Minutes:

8.4.a 22 June 2020

Moved by Trustee Schwartz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole Budget meeting dated 22 June 2020 be received.

Carried

8.4.b 21 July 2020

Moved by Trustee Schwartz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole Budget meeting dated 21 July 2020 be received.

Carried

8.4.c 11 August 2020

**Moved by Trustee Schwartz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,
THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole Budget
meeting dated 11 August 2020 be received.**

Carried

8.4.d 13 August 2020

**Moved by Trustee Schwartz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,
THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole Budget
meeting dated 13 August 2020 be received.**

Carried

8.4.e 18 August 2020

**Moved by Trustee Schwartz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,
THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole Budget
meeting dated 18 August 2020 be received.**

Carried

8.4.f 26 August 2020

**Moved by Trustee Schwartz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,
THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole Budget
meeting dated 26 August 2020 be received.**

Carried

The recommendation to approve the 2020-2021 budget was dealt with at the 26 August 2020 Special Board meeting.

8.5 Non-Consent Items

There were no non-consent items.

8.6 Unfinished Business, Special Board, 25 August 2020

8.6.a Notice of Motion, Re: Request to the Province for the Provision of Health and Safety Precautions, Trustee Scott

Trustee Penny assumed the Chair.

Notice of motion having been given, Trustee Scott moved as follows with minor changes,

Moved by Trustee Scott, seconded by Trustee Jennekens,

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted some gaps in Ontario's statutory and regulatory environment with regard to managing responses to a serious province-wide public health emergency;

WHEREAS the Minister of Education published the *Guide to Reopening Ontario's Schools* on 30 July 2020, and updated it on 13 August 2020;

WHEREAS the *Guide to Reopening Ontario's Schools* provides no authority to school districts to require compliance with its recommendations for such health and safety precautions as the use of face masks by all those individuals for whom there is no medical or developmental exemption;

WHEREAS intentional non-compliance with health and safety precautions may pose unacceptable risks to others, resulting in families withdrawing their children from school because of the perceived risk, or work refusals on the part of staff;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board ask the Premier and Minister of Education to amend existing legislation and/or regulations thereunder, or to develop new legislation and/or regulations, as soon as possible, to give school districts and/or local public health officials appropriate authority to require compliance and to impose a range of appropriate consequences for intentional non-compliance with health and safety precautions implemented in schools to address a serious province-wide public health emergency.

Trustee Scott noted that although there are many expectations and codes of conduct for staff and students, the Board should not be expected to rely on Section 265 of the *Education Act* to exclude students from school if they pose a danger to physical or mental health in school. She submitted that, if the province expects school boards to follow their rules for COVID-19, then they should provide tools to enable school boards to do so.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Hough

THAT the Board end debate on this motion.

Carried

Moved by Trustee Scott, seconded by Trustee Jennekens,

THAT the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board ask the Premier and Minister of Education to amend existing legislation and/or regulations thereunder, or to develop new legislation and/or regulations, as soon as possible, to give school districts and/or local public health officials appropriate authority to require compliance and to impose a range of appropriate consequences for intentional non-compliance with health and safety precautions implemented in schools to address a serious province-wide public health emergency.

Carried

A recorded vote was held and the motion was carried on the following division:

FOR: Trustees Scott, Boothby, Blackburn, Hough, Ellis, Jennekens, Penny, Lyra Evans, Bell, Fisher, Schwartz (11)

AGAINST: Nil (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Trustee Campbell (1)

8.6.b Notice of Motion, Re: Return to In Person Board Meetings, Trustee Blackburn

Notice of motion having previously been given, Trustee Blackburn moved as follows:

Moved by Trustee Blackburn,

WHEREAS staff of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board are expected to return to work in person,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the Board return to holding in person meetings in the Boardroom at 133 Greenbank Road.

Trustee Blackburn expressed the view that, as leaders, trustees should set an example and return to in person meetings in the Board Room at 133 Greenbank Road. She submitted that the Board Room is large enough to ensure physical distancing, and those who object to coming into the building can continue to participate electronically.

The motion failed for lack of a seconder.

8.7 Notice of Motion to Amend a Previous Motion re. Wearing of Masks, Trustee Blackburn

Notice of motion having previously been given, Trustee Blackburn moved as follows:

Moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

WHEREAS on 25 August 2020, the Board approved a motion to strongly recommend the wearing of masks at school for students in grades K-3 whenever reasonable;

WHEREAS, parents have expressed their concern that the wearing of masks for younger students is not mandatory;

WHEREAS Section 12.14 of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board By-Laws and Standing Rules allows for a "motion to amend something previously adopted may be made only with due notice in writing, which should set out new information or other reasons in support of the motion";

AND WHEREAS, the City of Ottawa has seen a rise in the number of confirmed COVID-19 and has now been declared in a second wave of COVID-19;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

THAT the motion approved on 25 August 2020, viz., THAT the Board strongly recommends the wearing of masks at school for students in Grades K-3 whenever reasonable, be amended to replace the words "strongly recommends the" with "requires the mandatory" and deleting the words "whenever reasonable", to read as follows: THAT the Board requires the mandatory wearing of masks at school for students in Grades K-3.

Trustee Blackburn noted that the District currently makes accommodations for those students in grades K-12 who are unable to wear masks. She added that other school districts require the mandatory wearing of masks for all students and they have not encountered any difficulties.

Trustee Lyra Evans noted that the City is experiencing an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases and the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario says that mandatory masks would reduce the spread of the disease. She added that Ottawa Public Health (OPH) requires masks in stores for everyone over the age of two.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the following be added to the end of the motion: "exempting students with a medical condition which prevents the wearing of masks."

On a point of order, Trustee Fisher queried whether this matter should have been presented for reconsideration. He noted that OPH has not

changed its position regarding mask wearing for students in grades K-12. Chair Scott advised that she consulted staff with respect to this motion, and ruled that this motion is to amend a previous substantive motion based on new information and a change in circumstances and not to undo a previous motion.

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

- The District's process for granting an exemption does not require a medical certificate to support the exemption;
- Trustee Lyra Evans submitted that a medical certificate should be required for an exemption to avoid any claims of liability or that exemptions are granted indiscriminately;
- Trustee Boothby noted that some children cannot manage masks for a variety of reasons and it would not be prudent to place a burden on medical offices to provide exemptions at this time;
- Staff advised that students who require an exemption may request accommodation on human rights grounds;

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Jennekens, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT "on the same grounds as students in grades 4-12" replace "with a medical condition which prevents the wearing of masks".

Carried, friendly

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell, seconded by Trustee Fisher,

THAT "and a reasonable inability to tolerate masks" be added to the amendment.

On a point of order, Chair Scott ruled that the sub-amendment is in order as it broadens the grounds for exemption rather than changing the intent of the amendment.

During discussion of the sub-amendment, the following points were noted:

- Trustee Campbell noted that many parents have said that their young children cannot tolerate the masks because they become soaked with saliva and their children say they cannot breathe. He submitted that the grounds should be expanded beyond medical or human rights grounds;
- Currently, requests for exemption are adjudicated by the school principal; and

- "reasonable inability to tolerate" could be used as a reason for exemption for those who do not believe that wearing a mask prevents infection or for children who don't like wearing masks.
- "inability to tolerate" depends on the interpretation of the adjudicator and could lead to inequities of application;

Trustee Campbell expressed the view that it is appropriate for the school principal to make a decision about a student's inability to tolerate a mask, as it would be their responsibility to suspend a student for non-compliance.

Chair Scott advised that, as of this summer, it is no longer permissible to suspend students in primary grades.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell, seconded by Trustee Fisher,

THAT "and a reasonable inability to tolerate masks" be added to the amendment.

Defeated

During discussion on the amendment, as sub-amended, viz: "THAT the following be added to the end of the motion: "exempting students on the same grounds as students in grades 4-12", the following points were noted:

- There is no specific direction from the Ministry of Education or OPH to support the mandatory wearing of masks in grades K-13. If a student decides to exclude a child from attending school, it could be difficult to uphold the exclusion without specific direction to do so; and
- Trustee Lyra Evans expressed the view that if the amendment is carried, it should include stated exemptions for clarity.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the following be added to the end of the motion: "exempting students on the same grounds as students in grades 4-12."

Carried

During discussion on the main motion, as amended, the following points were noted:

- Trustee Campbell expressed the view that staff work with families of younger children on mask wearing rather than impose the mandatory wearing of masks where enforcement would be difficult to uphold;

- Requests for exemption could give false hope to parents and impose a significant amount work for staff;
- OPH does not recommend the mandatory wearing of masks for children in primary grades;
- Trustee Schwartz noted that OC Transpo requires mask wearing for all users. She asked staff to speak to the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) about making masks mandatory on school buses;
- The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) is responsible for setting the rules for mask wearing on school buses;
- OPH strongly recommends, but does not require, mask wearing on school buses;
- With respect to split grade classes with students in grades three and four, all students in primary grades have clear plastic desk shields, while students in grade four wear masks. Students in these split classes do not mix in class;
- Many families in the community are telling their trustees that they are in favour of mandatory masks;
- Staff would require the wearing of extra personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitation if they provide assistance to students who are having trouble putting on their mask when entering the school;
- Trustee Boothby expressed concern for parents who experience difficulty navigating the OCDSB system and are unaware of their rights or how to appeal decisions;
- Trustee Hough expressed the view that parents should determine whether or not their young children should wear a mask; and
- Trustee Blackburn urged Board members to support the motion and help to prevent the spread of disease.

Moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT the Board requires the mandatory wearing of masks at school for students in Grades K-3, exempting students on the same grounds as students in grades 4-12.

Defeated

A recorded vote was held and the motion was defeated on the following division:

FOR: Trustees Blackburn, Ellis, Lyra Evans, Jennekens (4)

AGAINST: Trustees Boothby, Hough, Campbell, Penny, Bell, Fisher, Schwartz, Scott (8)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil (0)

8.8 Report 20-076, Appointment of Community Representative to Special Education Advisory Committee (M. Giroux)

The Board had before it Report 20-076 seeking approval to appoint a community representative to the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for a term effective from 22 September 2020 to 14 November 2022.

Executive Officer Giroux advised that Community Representative Rob Kirwan tendered his resignation effective 19 August 2020. She noted that in 2018, a SEAC selection committee created a waiting list should there be a vacancy before the end of the current term. Ms. Wellings was on the waiting list.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Boothby,

THAT Amy Wellings be appointed to the position of community representative to the Special Education Advisory Committee for a term from 22 September 2020 to 14 November 2022.

Carried

A recorded vote was held and the motion was carried on the following division:

FOR: Trustees Boothby, Hough, Campbell, Ellis, Lyra Evans, Jennekens, Penny, Bell, Fisher, Scott, Schwartz (11)

AGAINST: Trustee Blackburn (1)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil (0)

8.9 Supporting School Councils in 2020-2021

Chair Scott advised that the Parent Involvement Committee met on 21 September 2020 to consider a report on the unique issues relating to school councils for the 2020-2021 school year, including meeting format, elections, and engagement between families attending Ottawa-Carleton Virtual (OCV) schools and their home school to inform the drafting of necessary revisions to PR.509.SCO School Council Elections, Constitution and By-Laws. A partial report of the PIC meeting, including a recommendation from PIC to allow OCV parents to continue to be parent members of the school council at their children's home schools, was provided to the Board.

Trustee Hough expressed concern that parents who participate in their child's home school may not have time to serve on the council of their virtual school. She suggested that virtual school parents serving on home school councils be limited to non-executive and non-voting roles.

Trustee Campbell, noting the requirement to respect the *Ontario Regulation* governing Parental Involvement Committees and the Board's policy, submitted that the parents of students currently attending a school should be the ones providing advice to the school principal. He suggested that parents of students currently attending a virtual school be permitted to attend council meetings at their child's home school in a non-voting capacity.

Trustee Scott advised that the Board requires a recommendation to give direction to staff to amend the Board procedure. Executive Officer Giroux advised that the policy requires some housekeeping amendments to reflect the current operating environment.

*** The vote to continue the meeting past 10:30 p.m. received the required two-third's majority to continue. ***

Moved by Trustee Hough, seconded by Trustee Campbell,

- A. Notwithstanding Policy P.014.SCO School Councils, THAT staff be directed to amend Procedure PR.509.SCO School Council Elections, Constitution and By-Laws so that for the 2020-2021 school year OCV parents be allowed to continue to be parent members of the School Council at their children's home schools; and
- B. THAT the particulars of the participation of those parents at the school council be determined by the school council itself.

Moved by Trustee Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Campbell

THAT the Board adopt the rules of committee.

Carried

Trustee Blackburn expressed concern about inconsistency of application if individual school councils are permitted to determine participation of OVC parents at school council meetings of their home school. She queried how OVC parents would be aware of, and be able to vote on, the use of funds raised by the school council in the previous year. Executive Officer Giroux advised that school distribution lists are created based on information in the Trillium school database, and individual schools could append the distribution lists for virtual schools when communicating with parents.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Ellis,

- A. THAT "voting or executive members " replace "parent members"; and

B. THAT Part B be deleted.

Trustee Lyra Evans submitted that leaving the decision regarding OVC parent participation to the home school council may be hampered by the inability to elect their school council members without knowing whether OVC parents would be voting or non-voting members.

Several trustees noted that school experiences would be different for in-school and virtual school councils. They queried whether an in-school council voting to transfer funds raised to a virtual school council would be in contravention of the *Regulation*. Staff advised that this approach takes a broad interpretation of the definition of parent member. It also acknowledges the current circumstances whereby all schools, including virtual schools, must have their own school council. Trustees noted their discomfort at possibly having parents with no students at a school having control of a school council.

Trustee Hough expressed concern about individual school councils determining how virtual parents would participate in their home school councils. She noted that virtual schools could have low parent participation in their school councils if they were permitted to continue as members of their home school councils. She also queried whether funding would be made available for virtual school councils.

Trustee Ellis noted that a number of current schools do not have school councils. He suggested that virtual parents who have been participating in their home school councils may return to their home schools during the year. Trustee Schwartz added that parents with children in more than one school can participate in more than one school council.

Moved by Trustee Schwartz, seconded by Trustee Penny,

THAT the meeting continue past 11:00 p.m. for this item only.

Carried

*** The vote to continue the meeting past 11:00 p.m. for this item received the required unanimous consent. ***

Trustee Penny assumed the Chair.

Trustee Scott noted that the intent of school councils is to provide advice to school administration on ways to improve the educational and school experience, engage parents, and be involved in their children's education. She added that fundraising is not the primary function of school councils. In order to provide advice, Trustee Scott submitted that parents should be familiar with what is going on in the school. Trustee Scott expressed the opinion that parents of students in the Ottawa-

Carleton Virtual School (OCV) be allowed to continue to participate in in-school councils as non-voting members.

Trustee Scott resumed the Chair.

Trustee Jennekens supported virtual parents' attendance at in-school councils to provide input and liaison with the virtual school.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell, seconded by Trustee Boothby,

THAT "non-voting members or, where insufficient in-school parent candidates have put themselves forward for established school council positions continue to be allowed to be" be inserted prior to "voting or executive members".

Trustee Campbell noted that his sub-amendment is welcoming for virtual parents and allows school councils to proceed with their elections. In response to a query, staff advised that this option would be permissible and allow virtual parents to maintain ties with their home school.

Trustee Penny expressed concern that revising the Board policy would contravene the *Regulation* which defines parent members as parents with children attending a school.

Moved by Trustee Penny, seconded by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the motion be deferred pending receipt of legal advice.

Executive Officer Giroux advised that staff has consulted with legal counsel on the proposed expansion of the definition of parent member and legal counsel had no objections. She noted the need to provide direction to school councils as soon as possible as school council elections must be held within 30 days of the start of the school year.

Moved by Trustee Penny, seconded by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the motion be deferred pending receipt of legal advice.

Defeated

Trustee Hough expressed concern that the amendments and sub-amendments were too prescriptive and moving away from the intent of the original motion to allow virtual parents to have a connection with their home school for the 2020-2021 school year.

Moved the Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Schwartz,

THAT the Board end debate on the sub-amendment.

Carried

On the sub-amendment, Trustee Campbell clarified that if there are not enough in-school parents available for voting or executive positions on their school council, then interested virtual school parents would be eligible for these positions.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Campbell, seconded by Trustee Boothby,

THAT "non-voting members or, where insufficient in-school parent candidates have put themselves forward for established school council positions continue to be allowed to be" be inserted prior to "voting or executive members".

Carried

On the amendment, as sub-amended, Trustee Lyra Evans submitted that the amendment clearly addresses any concerns raised on the participation of virtual school parents on the in-school council.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans, seconded by Trustee Ellis,

A. THAT "non-voting members or, where insufficient in-school parent candidates have put themselves forward for established school council positions continue to be allowed to be voting or executive members " replace "parent members"; and

B. THAT Part B be deleted.

Carried

Moved by Trustee Ellis,

That debate on the motion be closed.

Carried

Moved by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the Board end the rules of Committee

Carried

Trustee Hough expressed the hope that the motion will meet the needs of school councils as they move forward with their elections.

Moved by Trustee Hough, seconded by Trustee Campbell,

Notwithstanding Policy P.014.SCO School Councils, THAT staff be directed to amend Procedure PR.509.SCO School Council Elections, Constitution and By-Laws so that for the 2020-2021 school year OCV parents be allowed to be non-voting members or, where insufficient in-school parent candidates have put themselves forward for

established school council positions continue to be allowed to be voting or executive members of the School Council at their children's home schools.

Carried

A recorded vote was held and the motion was carried unanimously by those present:

FOR: Trustees Boothby, Blackburn, Hough, Campbell, Schwartz, Jennekens, Penny, Lyra Evans, Bell, Scott, Ellis (11)

AGAINST: Nil (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil (0)

9. Matters for Discussion

9.1 Memo 20-125, Update of Summer School (S. Smith)

9.2 Report from OPSBA Representatives (if required)

10. Matters for Information

There were no matters for information.

11. New Business -- Information and Inquiries

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 p.m.

As directed in the motion to continue the meeting past 11:00 p.m., the following items were not dealt with at the meeting:

Item 9. Matters for Discussion

Item 10: Matters for Information

Item 11: New Business - Information and Inquiries

Lynn Scott, Chair of the Board