

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE PUBLIC REPORT

Tuesday, October 13, 2020, 6:30 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, and Lynn Scott.
Student Trustees:	Joy Liu and Charles Chen
Staff:	Camille Williams-Taylor (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of Human Resources), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Dorothy Baker, Prince Duah, Mary Jane Farrish, Shawn Lehman and Shannon Smith (Superintendents of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Geoff Best, (Director, Ottawa International Student Programs), Sandra Owens (Manager of Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager, Communications and Information Services), Richard Sinclair (Manager of Legal Services and Labour Relations), Nicole Guthrie (Manager, Board Services), Jacqueline Lawrence (Equity and Diversity Coordinator), Jody Alexander, (Vice-Principal, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education), Melissa Collins (System Principal of Equity), Michael Guilbault, (Central AV Technical Specialist), Rebecca Grandis (Senior Board Coordinator), Darren Gatley (Board/Committee Coordinator)
Non-Voting Representatives Present:	Stephanie Kirkey, (OSSTF-Teachers); Susan Gardner, (ETFO); Brian Lesage (ETFO-Alternate); Christine Moulaison (OCASC); Robert James, (OCEOC-Alternate); Steven Spidell (OCSSAN); David Wildman (OCEOTA); Jean Trant, (OSSTF-ESP-Alternate)

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

Vice-Chair Penny called the meeting to order at 7:10 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

Chair Scott noted that October has three areas for reflection as we mark Islamic Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month and Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. She added that these are times to reflect on the school community and what we all need to do to ensure everyone has an opportunity to learn and remember that learning continues throughout the year.

Chair Scott advised that the District is looking for new members for the Advisory Committee on the Arts. Those interested can join the committee for the first zoom meeting of the school year on 19 October 2020.

The OCDSB is looking for parents and interested community members to serve on the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC). Details about PIC and the responsibility of members is on the OCDSB website. Applications will be accepted until 30 October 2020.

4. Briefing from the Director

Director Williams-Taylor reported that families were sent a Back to School Survey to share their experiences regarding the start of the school year. This input was important as the District looks to the months ahead. More than 14,000 students, parents and staff have completed the Thought Exchange survey that closes at the end of day on 16 October 2020.

The District received an overwhelming response from parents and students regarding the Paul Davis webinars that were held in September. An additional session for grades 4 to 6 will be held on 14 October 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

Director Williams-Taylor noted that in October we recognize National Principals' Month, Custodial Workers Recognition Day, and World Teachers' Day. She extended her deepest thanks to principals for their leadership, custodians for their hard work, and the teachers for their devotion to learning.

5. Delegations

5.1 Robin Browne, 613-819 Black Hub, Re. School Resource Program

Robin Browne presented his statement on the School Resource Officer program. He suggested the District remove barriers to equity of access, opportunity, and outcomes, prioritize the dignity and well-being of students in caring and inclusive classrooms, and build authentic engagement with communities.

In response to a query from Trustee Campbell, Mr. Browne confirmed that he would like to see responses of the School Resource Officer (SRO) review disaggregated with focus on the responses from Black students presented separately.

Mr. Browne noted that he will review the consultation plan to ensure it provides a place for marginalized community members to be heard.

In response to a query from Student Trustee Liu, Mr. Brown agreed that counselors should be approached for issues of harassment and bullying rather than police officers. He noted that a model similar to the one used in Eugene, Oregon, called the Cahoots Program, in which a team of two social workers respond to issues rather than police, is recommended.

5.2 Lyse-Pascale Inamuco, 613-819 Black Hub, Re. Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023

Lyse-Pascale Inamuco presented her delegation. She raised concern that the roadmap did not address Black students. She was seeking reassurance that the concerns of Black students will be fully addressed under the umbrella of equity and human rights. She suggested that the District create a Black Education Learning Team similar to the Indigenous Education Learning Team and that the District commit to having the Black Education Team work in collaboration with Black communities on all aspects of implementing the roadmap.

In response to a query from Trustee Campbell, Ms. Inamuco clarified that she views black issues as being as important as Indigenous issues, but recognized the differences, and would like this to be reflected on the current roadmap. She noted that black issues need to be addressed separately in order to bring real change.

6. COVID-19 Update

Director Williams-Taylor reported that management of Covid-19 in schools is the District's top priority. She noted that the City of Ottawa has seen an increased number of cases. There has been only one outbreak in a school that caused the closure of a class, which has since reopened. She added that generally there is not an in-school spread of COVID-19. She noted that strategies like wearing masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hand hygiene, and physical distancing, have been successful.

Associate Director Reynolds reported that changes in the provincial guidelines for COVID-19 screening and self-assessment is reflected in the Ottawa Public Health (OPH) online tool. He explained that the most notable changes are that symptoms are now tiered. This will help parents differentiate from other symptoms (i.e., seasonal allergies) not related to COVID-19 with guidelines to either self-isolate for the full period or to see if the symptoms will resolve themselves after a few days. He also noted that isolation times for the onset of symptoms have changed from 14 days to 10 days, however, household contacts that have not experienced symptoms are still asked to isolate for the full 14 days.

Associate Director Reynolds pointed out that as positive COVID-19 cases are rising, it has become necessary to make adjustments to ensure timely reporting. The District has been working with OPH to streamline processes with the following key changes: streamlining and automating parts of the case management system and contact tracing; modifying the process of sending letters to high risk contacts; following-up with automated calls from OPH to positive cases on days 1, 7, and 14 days of isolation; reducing the period for self isolation of positive cases from 14 days to 10 days; and cases that have been resolved will be reported on the OCDSB dashboard. .

Associate Director Reynolds reported that OPH has filled 45 nursing positions in schools that are, generally assigned based on geography, to 5 or 10 schools. Should a school not have a dedicated nurse, superintendents and principals have a direct number to contact OPH should there be an issue at their respective school. He noted that nurses have been working closely with principals regarding best practices such as contact tracing, facilitating support for mental health resources, school safety checklists, and review of infection control measures.

Superintendent McCoy reported that concerns around the pandemic and the late start to the school year has created delays confirming the fall enrolment numbers. She added that the District is in the process of finalizing staffing and enrollment; although most contract positions have been filled, hiring is ongoing to help fill the more specific assignments (i.e. French as a Second Language) and also casual staff. She noted that communities will be notified if there are significant reorganizational changes that may affect classroom configurations or class sizes. Human Resources staff have been working closely with senior staff, principals and managers to implement strategies for redeploying school and central staff to backfill higher than usual absences.

Director Williams-Taylor noted that the District is incurring costs for PPE in addition to the provincial funding initiative to provide PPE. She added that usage rates of PPE are above expectations and more is being ordered above the provincial supply. The Ministry will be implementing a workgroup to identify reasons why PPE usage has been higher than expected.

During the question period, the following points were noted:

- Roughly 1,400 elementary students and 600 secondary students are currently on a waitlist for the Ottawa-Carleton Virtual School (OCV). To date, 400 elementary students have moved back to in person schools. The District plan to move approximately 1,000 elementary students to OCV elementary depending on the available spaces in grade levels or a particular program;
- OCDSB's student waiting list is notably smaller than other school boards;
- The District is not looking at changing the secondary school model as that may affect the timetables already in place and the current stability;
- There has only been one instance of OPH asking the District to close a classroom;
- The District depends on OPH verification of positive COVID-19 cases;
- OPH nurses are full time positions that focus their time in OCDSB schools;
- Of the 1,000 students on the OCV waiting list, the majority are currently enrolled at in-person schools;
- Staff movement from in person schools to OCV has been minimal as staffing is based on enrollment; and
- Efforts have been made to ensure that occasional teachers fill teacher absences before contract teachers or other staff are used.

7. Matters for Action:

7.1 Report 20-079, Plan for Welcoming International Students (C. Williams-Taylor)

Your committee had before it Report 20-079 seeking support for the OCDSB Attestation to Receive International Students in accordance with federal and provincial requirements as well as approving a Board resolution affirming the District's commitment to upholding the requirements. The report outlines the readiness of the OCDSB and the Ottawa-Carleton Education Network (OCENET) to safely welcome international students into OCDSB schools and local communities.

Executive Director of Ottawa International Student Programs, Geoff Best, provided members with an overview of the plan for welcoming international students.

During the discussion, the following comments were noted:

- COVID-19 has had a large impact on international students with Ottawa losing up to 70% of these students;
- Until Ontario has plans in place across the districts, restrictions for accepting international students will not be relaxed;
- International students will need to be monitored to ensure they are healthy both physically and mentally and to make sure they comply with quarantine rules;
- International students will be provided with an arrival guide to ensure students are prepared before they leave home. The guide will outline procedures of before, during, and after quarantine;
- Host families usually take on about 50% of these international students and guidelines will be provided for these families as well;
- Members expressed concern that the attestation was incomplete and did not feel there was enough information to give their support;
- The Ministry is looking for the Board and District to understand their responsibility for compliance of the provincial requirements for the supervision of students if the District is to continue the international student program. The Ministry will reserve the option to change the plan if new information becomes available;
- The District needs to receive a designation before it is able to accept international students. The designation will be received from the Ministry once the resolution and attestation are approved by the Board;
- The Ministry did not provide the wording of the resolution, however, the Ministry confirmed that the presented wording is appropriate; and
- International students are required to have medical insurance for the duration of their visit to Canada.

Moved by Trustee Boothby,

THAT the Board affirms that the OCDSB international student program will comply with the travel and readiness guidelines for accepting international and domestic students coming from abroad as established by the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Canadian Federal Government for 2020-2021 school year.

Chair Scott agreed that as the Ministry may change the guidelines, the board should comply with whatever guidelines are added or changed.

In response to a query from Trustee Fisher, Director Williams-Taylor noted that trustees will be provided with updates once the District receives a designation and the plan is approved by the Ministry.

Moved by Trustee Boothby,

THAT the Board affirms that the OCDSB international student program will comply with the travel and readiness guidelines for accepting international and domestic students coming from abroad as established by the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Canadian Federal Government for 2020-2021 school year.

Carried

8. Reports from Statutory and Other Committees

8.1 ACE, 27 August 2020

Moved by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the report from the Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE), dated 27 August 2020, be received.

Carried

8.2 SEAC, 9 September 2020

Moved by Trustee Boothby,

THAT the report from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), dated 9 September 2020, be received.

Carried

8.3 IEAC, 17 September 2020

Moved by Trustee Hough,

THAT the report from the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC), dated 17 September 2020, be received.

Carried

8.4 PIC, 21 September 2020

Moved by Trustee Hough,

THAT the report from the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), dated 21 September 2020, be received.

Carried

8.5 Audit Committee, 23 September 2020

Moved by Trustee Fisher,

THAT the report from the Audit Committee dated 23 September 2020, be received.

Carried

9. Matters for Discussion:

9.1 Report 20-080, Consultation Plan to Review Police Involvement in OCDSB Schools (MJ. Farrish)

Your committee had before it Report 20-080, seeking approval of the proposed consultation plan to review the Policy P.043.SCO, Police Involvement in Schools, that includes an overall review of the OCDSB practices, outcomes and impacts when involving police in schools.

Director Williams-Taylor introduced the report and noted that it is important to recognize the range of perspectives shared in the development of the consultation.

Superintendent Farrish provided an overview of the consultation plan.

During the discussion period, the following comments were noted:

- The last revision of the Police Involvement in Schools Policy was in 2008;
- The last revision of the Protocol to Accompany Safe Schools Policies in the City of Ottawa was in 2016;
- Youth Services will be consulted during the review process;
- Identity profiling of participants (including school councils and committees) will be voluntary. Members recognized that some feedback will be obtained in a confidential manner in order to reduce barriers;
- There will be a findings report presented before the Budget Committee in the spring of 2021 to discuss School Resource Officers (SROs) and make recommendations;
- The Steering Group will provide guidance on how to present the information to outside groups included in the consultation;
- Protocol to Accompany Safe Schools Policies is reviewed by the Regional Safe Schools Committee. Review of OCDSB practices of

engaging police may have an impact on future participation by the the District;

- The steering group will be composed of marginalized groups, current and past students, and interested Advisory Committee for Equity (ACE) members. The steering group will take a human rights centered approach to ensure the voices that need to be heard are represented;
- Feedback from the steering group will provide firsthand accounts of experiences with SRO's. This information will be prioritized by allowing marginalized voices to have the most impact and will also be influenced by student voices;
- Ottawa Police Services (OPS) will be engaged in the consultation process in the form of updates, although OPS and SRO's will have an opportunity to provide input, the focus will be on students, staff, and families;
- Ways to engage and gain feedback in the steering group will be culturally appropriate. This will reduce barriers to increase feedback and participation;
- There will be opportunities to include feedback from ACE;
- Policies such as the mandatory requirements for police presence in schools are formed provincially and are currently under review. The District is working closely with the Human Rights and Equity Advisor to review these policies with a human rights lens
- District policy provides discretionary reasons for police involvement in schools;
- The Chief of the Ottawa Police Service committed to re-examining police practices which creates an opportunity for partnership with OCDSB, by leveraging and lobbying a voice around change;
- The District's engagements in social services are human rights centered. The board has taken an active approach in researching and advocating for change that will garner the kind of attention needed to influence police practices. Municipal offices are also interested in the work the District is doing and will create possible opportunities to work with other committed partners to influence and advance human rights;
- The District will receive input through virtual public meetings for school councils that will be promoted through the chairs of advisory committees, the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC), and school principals. An email account will also be set up to receive feedback throughout the consultation process;

- Trustees expressed concern that the steering group will be sizable with representatives from several committees and other groups. Trustees want to be sure that the steering group can overcome barriers to meet and to ensure that members will have enough speaking time;
- The steering group will not meet regularly as a whole, but communication will be sent to group members to speak to particular items outlined in the different phases of the consultation plan;
- The intent of the steering group is to provide accountability in terms of the board's leadership and guidance of the consultation plan in order to achieve authentic engagement;
- Trustees pointed out that typically committee membership is publically known and that minutes, and supportive evidence in the form of letters, and testimonials are usually presented to trustees for review. The steering group must be a welcome space for its members to discuss freely in a transparent manner;
- Steering group membership will be made public in consultation with the Human Rights and Equity Advisor. There may also be an opportunity through the steering group's process for certain anonymity in feedback; and
- ACE will have a standing agenda item for updates on the Steering Group;

9.2 Report 20-053, Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023 (D. Baker)

Your committee had before it Report 20-053, to provide the foundation for the introduction of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board's Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap 2020-2023, which sets direction in identifying and addressing systemic barriers that impact equitable access, opportunity and outcomes for underserved students and staff. The Roadmap operationalizes many of the priorities identified in the OCDSB 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, and outlines the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities at all levels of the organization in serving students, parents, staff and community

Superintendent Baker explained that a cyclical policy review will be used to streamline policy and procedures. She noted that when policies and procedures are due for a cyclical review, they will be examined through an equity and human rights lens;

Staff explained that the notation of "pilot" in the report means a continuation and expansion with possibility for review of particular programs. The District will be destreaming Math and English for grades 9 and 10. The District is currently accessing where destreaming already

exists and will then formalize that process to follow and adhere to the Ministry's protocol;

Superintendent Baker agreed that the report needs to articulate the definition of human rights as Indigenous groups are separate from equity seeking groups. She noted that this is why "Indigenous" was included in the title of the document in order to honour the first peoples of the land;

Ms. Alexander clarified that Indigenous groups are not equity seeking groups as they seek sovereignty instead. She noted that the report will include *the Canadian Rights and Freedoms Act*, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC);

Superintendent Baker noted that there is a regulation in *the Education Act* for a process to establish an Indigenous trustee. She added that a reciprocal education agreement with a reserve for Indigenous families to choose either their reserve school or the public school system would first be required. As the District currently does not have any such agreement, an Indigenous student trustee could be contemplated;

Chair Scott noted that in the past, the cyclical review of policies has not always occurred. She added that this is an opportunity to ensure there is a review of policies to guarantee they are up to date. She urged members to find a way to commit more time on policy review to ensure accountability.

Superintendent Baker explained that there is room in the existing curriculum for diverse perspectives. She added that it is more of a question on how the District can build capacity and accountability for educators to implement that perspective. She hoped that the goals of the roadmap will build support through school improvement planning processes to ensure that change will happen. She added that staff in the Program and Learning (PAL) department are working to create and deepen knowledge and awareness in staff; and although this has helped, the goal is to create systemic change. She pointed out that systemic change is difficult without first having the accountability pieces in place.

***** The 10:30 pm vote received the required two-thirds majority to continue*****

Director Williams-Taylor added that educators are required to teach the curriculum and that the report disrupts the current narrative. She noted that the report does not seek to rewrite Ministry policy, but rather to take the existing curriculum and practice it in a way that engages all students and all perspectives.

Director Williams-Taylor explained that enforcement of the Roadmap would become a Human Resources issue as the District sets expectations, direction, and support in the delivery of materials. Enforcement would come in the form of teacher performance appraisals,

principal performance appraisals, and superintendent performance appraisals. She also noted that transparency to the public can be attributed as accountability. In addition to the appraisal process, there may be other accountability measures that will be used to support staff in order to meet expectations.

Superintendent Baker noted that although Indigenous education and Black excellence are highlighted, intersectionality on the Roadmap includes focus on other marginalized groups.

Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner added that the District is trying to implement accountability mechanisms that would disaggregate by identity. She thinks that this would be a tool used to identify any disproportionate disparity between groups so that any issues can be addressed.

Human Rights and Equity Advisor Tanner agreed that there are gaps in accountability. She noted that work is underway to revise the complaints policy, the District's current mechanism for accountability in this area. She added that input will be welcome from students and interested stakeholders

Equity and Diversity Coordinator Lawrence noted that the models in the Roadmap were derived from community partners and experts in the field and is a part of standard practice.

Director Williams-Taylor noted that poverty was mentioned within the roadmap under Student Achievement Through Equity (SATE). She added that work on SATE is being undertaken and will be presented to trustees at a future meeting.

Superintendent Duah shared that the work on SATE has been informed by data from school boards across North America and Europe which seeks to understand whether poverty is a determining factor in student success and education. He added that although poverty cannot be removed from schools, SATE helps identify other socioeconomic barriers that can be overcome to further promote student success.

Trustee Campbell expressed concern that there are no Black student support coordinators.

Superintendent Baker noted that Indigenous and Black rights are at the forefront and that it is important to identify the difference between human rights and Indigenous rights. She noted that although there are qualitative differences, there is some intersection of these rights as well. She noted that the Roadmap focuses on Indigenous education and highlights the importance of UNDRIP and TRC; as well as the Board's commitment to the UN International Decade for People of African Descent. She also noted that commitments made publicly by the Board are embedded in the Roadmap.

Superintendent Baker explained that focusing on Indigenous issues by including “Indigenous” in the title of the Roadmap is to honour the First Peoples with emphasis on the Algonquin band. She agreed that there are equity representatives and other group representatives in schools already but this is an area that needs a qualitative approach to address anti-Black racism and Black excellence.

12. Adjournment

**** The 11:00 p.m. vote did not receive unanimous consent and the meeting was adjourned. ****

Keith Penny, Chair