



BOARD

15 December 2020

Report No. 20-087

Approval of Board Work Plan and Areas of Focus for 2020-2021

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PURPOSE:

1. To approve the key areas of focus and the Board work plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN:

2. The development and approval of the key areas of focus and a Board work plan assists in advancing the Board's work to achieve a higher level of governance, shifting the focus to the Board's strategic work rather than operational matters. Three themes emerged during the annual reflection process and they align with the Board's goals of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

CONTEXT:

2. The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan has three key objectives - to create: a Culture of Innovation, a Culture of Caring, and a Culture of Social Responsibility.

In developing the 2020-2021 Board work plan, the Board has reflected on its accomplishments over the past year, identified areas of growth, reviewed its strategic plan, discussed areas of focus and implemented initiatives to help support its work during the pandemic.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. In accordance with the requirements set out in Board policy, P.130.GOV Evaluation Process for the Board of Trustees, the Board is responsible for planning and scheduling its work to govern the organization effectively.

The identification of the areas of focus enables the Board to clearly articulate its priorities. The annual work plan will identify the work to be undertaken, and outline the Board's expectations of its contributions to the achievement of the District's strategic objectives and establish milestones which can be tracked and evaluated.

4. Board Evaluation Process Generates Areas of Focus

On 20 October 2020, the Board met with a facilitator and held its annual review for 2019-2020 to assess the progress and accomplishments made throughout the year and to contemplate opportunities for growth. The Board also discussed the areas of focus for the 2020-2021 school year. This evaluation process was the second in a four-year cycle for the 2018-2022 Board of Trustees.

As part of the evaluation process, the Board reflected on 2019-2020, mindful of the impact that COVID-19 had on its accomplishments. In reflecting on the year, the trustees noted that, while some progress was made on the strategic goals and priorities they had identified for themselves, the plan's format must be revised to include specific and measurable actions.

Trustees referenced the February 2020 Board/Senior Staff retreat as a highlight of the year and stressed the continued importance of equity and programming at the OCDSB. They noted concern about the long-term impact of COVID-19 on equity and the concern is evidenced in the suggestions to focus only on the most essential aspects of the work with clarity and intention.

Three clear areas of focus emerged during the PD sessions;

- **Policy Review**– Determining a cyclical review and development process for the policies of the Board. This year will feature the development of a Human Rights Policy and a review of the Police Involvement in School Policy further highlighting the Board's emphasis on equity;
- **Governance**– The ongoing monitoring of the objectives of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, including the allocation of resources to priority areas, regular monitoring of student achievement and engaging the community in the development of policies. as well as a review of the role, function and reporting of Advisory Committees;
- **Learning**– Targeted professional development for the Board as a whole, including the annual retreat. The Board has identified governance, anti-racism training, and strategic enterprise risk management (SERM) as areas for collective learning.

5. Work Plan Development Process

At a subsequent session on 17 November 2020 the Board focused on the development of its work plan. An informal working group was established to draft the work plan. The working group met on 25 November 2020 to further the conversation and complete the draft.

The purpose of the Board work plan is to:

- a) Focus the work of the Board;
- b) Clearly articulate the Board's expectations of its contributions to the achievement of the OCDSB's strategic priorities and ensure the success of the organization; and
- c) To establish the benchmarks against which the Board can evaluate its performance.

The draft work plan, attached as Appendix A, references the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan's three objectives with an additional section outlining the Board's annual fiduciary responsibilities. Elements of the three areas of focus can be found within the proposed actions.

6. Monitoring Progress

The Board will monitor progress on its work plan during regular updates at Board every month. At the end of the year the Board can assess if they did what they said they were going to do as identified in the work plan. This would be an opportunity for the Board to reflect on what has been accomplished and highlight the next year's work as it prepares for a new cycle.

The Ad Hoc Committee for the Board Evaluation Process and the Director Performance Evaluation Process will meet to discuss the evaluation process and any revisions that may be required.

At the end of the year, the Board can measure its success as identified in the work plan. A revised work plan noting measures and accomplishments will be provided to the Board at their annual reflection to help inform the work that will take place in 2021-2022.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7. The creation of a work plan will require monitoring by the Board to ensure effective implementation. Time will be allocated on the agenda for this purpose. The creation of the work plan is intended to establish high-level priorities to inform the work of the Director and the District. The work plan itself does not require additional resources, but it does serve to measure how staff time will be invested to support the board's work.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

8. The Board will have the opportunity to review and discuss the work plan for the upcoming year and confirm its areas of focus during the Board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board approve the 2020-2021 Board Work Plan and Key Areas of Focus as outlined in Appendix A to Report 20-087.

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Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Draft Board Work Plan 2020-2021