

UPPER GRAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

MINUTES

2013 06 04

The Program Committee of Upper Grand District School Board met on Tuesday, June 4, 2013, in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Trustee Cooper presided, and the following Trustees were present: Bailey, Borden, Busuttil, Fairbairn, Gohn, Moziar, Topping, Waterston and Student Trustees Brown and Sampson. Present from administration was Director of Education, Dr. M. Rogers, Communications Officer, M. McFadzen, Administrative Officer, M. Weidmark, along with Superintendents Wright, Benallick, McDonald, Talbot and Assistant Superintendent Zen.

AGENDA

An In Camera Session was added at the end of the Open Session.

Trustee Busuttil moved that the Agenda be approved as amended.

The motion carried.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Waterston moved that the Minutes of the Meeting held on May 7, 2013 be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

DELEGATIONS

Supporting Transformative Learning Initiatives in the Upper Grand District School Board

Mr. Stan Kozak, addressed Trustees regarding Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF). LSF is a national non-governmental organization that was formed in 1992 and operates out of York University. Its driving force is the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the reorientation of education policy and practice to better prepare students as citizens. They encourage the move from traditional to transformed practice in education. He highlighted the key strategies of transformative learning and noted that Ministry initiatives that have been put in place in support of transformation practice include the school effectiveness framework, growing success,

capacity series monographs and research to practice monographs. LSF provides many resources and convenes several symposia each year. Mr. Kozak suggested the advancement of transformational learning in the UGDSB through knowledge mobilization and board-wide approaches to secondary school integrated programs. Guidelines to support using schoolyards for learning in new schools also provide opportunities. The idea is to expand from school based to board based programming. Mr. Kozak highlighted the model in the Limestone Board where 40 programs are made available at 13 high schools to all students of the board, with 800 students moving between the schools to access the programs.

In response to a question from Trustee Moziar, Mr. Kozak explained that many community partners are involved; some come in and work with a class and then leave, and others build a two way relationship to the betterment of both student learning and the community.

Sir Isaac Brock Grade 7 and 8 Feasibility Study

1. Betty Bakopoulos

Ms. Betty Bakopoulos, a parent of two students at Sir Isaac Brock and one student at Rickson Ridge, addressed Trustees in support of the grade 7 and 8 students from SIB continuing to attend the program at Rickson Ridge. Ms. Bakopoulos indicated that in addition to projected student enrolments and the financial implications of establishing an intermediate program at SIB, the success of the current program should also be considered as a critical factor in the decision making. It was noted that the impact of FDK implementation and the development on the Hart farm is still not known. In addition, the enrolment numbers predicted for Rickson Ridge when students are combined for the 7/8 program over the next ten years fall well within the range of intermediate division sizes (32-269 students) currently existing in schools across the board. As a teacher, Ms. Bakopoulos supported the importance of having rotary with specialist teachers. She also highlighted the benefits to the SIB students who attend Rickson Ridge. Ms. Bakopoulos also clarified that the two students who conducted a petition for students at Rickson Ridge had done so to exercise their right to fight for something in which they believed.

In response to a question from Trustee Busuttill, Ms. Bakopoulos clarified that she is asking the Trustees to consider delaying a decision on the 7/8 program at SIB until the impact of FDK and the Hart Farm development is known, in approximately 2015-16.

2. Lindsay Kolbuc

Ms. Lindsay Kolbuc, a parent of children at SIB (one in grade 4 and one in grade 2), addressed Trustees. She expressed her hope that her children will be able to remain at SIB for grades 7 and 8. Ms. Kolbuc indicated that she was pleased with the board's process to date and the multiple ways in which the community is able to provide feedback. Ms. Kolbuc expressed concern that the SIB parents are being misunderstood. She emphasized what the families believe are the benefits to support implementing 7 and 8 at their school, explaining their belief that the positive outcomes would outweigh any negative impact, in particular as they related to the social and

emotional experience children have at school. She highlighted the importance of a safe and emotionally secure learning environment which she believes is achieved by keeping children in their neighbourhood school from grades K-8. Ms. Kolbuc also indicated that a rotary program and high quality extracurricular activities would still be available to the grade 7 and 8 students if they remained at SIB.

In response to a question from Trustee Moziar, Ms. Kolbuc indicated that she did not believe families who had not yet had children move on to Rickson Ridge for grades 7 and 8 were more apprehensive about the process than those who had, as she had based her comments on her research and her own school experience in which she had attended a K-6 school and then moved to another school for grades 7/8, both of which were different schools than those attended by her siblings who remained in their own home school for grades K-8.

3. Treena Adhikari

Ms. Treena Adhikari addressed Trustees on behalf of a group of parents of students at SIB and spoke in favour of offering an intermediate program at SIB because it would be in the best interest of their children. She acknowledged the quality intermediate program being offered at Rickson Ridge and indicated the belief that the students of both schools would continue to receive the same high quality education that prepares them for high-school and beyond and extra-curricular leadership and learning opportunities if a program were to begin at SIB. Ms. Adhikari expressed concern that character and confidence building opportunities will be missed by many students struggling with the anxiety of a new bussing situation and completely new school environment. In addition she noted that families are being lost to the local neighbourhood catholic school. Ms. Adhikari asked Trustees to consider implementing this program as soon as possible, and to even consider a start date in September 2013.

In response to a question from Trustee Schieck, Ms. Adhikari indicated that families were unsuccessful in obtaining data regarding the number of students that moved from SIB to the neighbourhood K-8 Catholic School as neither school board is tracking that information. Anecdotally a neighbourhood group counted 20 children known to them who left SIB to attend St. Ignatius.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSE TO DELEGATIONS

Trustee Cooper thanked the delegations and informed them that the Sir Isaac Brock Grade 7/8 Feasibility Study Report will be received at the Business Operations Committee meeting scheduled Tuesday, June 11, 2013. There are opportunities for interested parties to delegate at that meeting as well as the Board meeting scheduled on June 25, 2013.

"ACHIEVING BY BELIEVING" AWARDS

Ms. Jeni Vaughn, Vice Principal, John F. Ross CVI, provided the background on the "Achieving by Believing" Awards. The recipients are selected by the Intervention Committee as part of the student success support. They are given to students in recognition of their hard work and desire to succeed in spite of difficult personal

situations.

Presentations were made to three grade 8 students who will be entering grade 9 in September and six high school students.

The staff award was given to Ms. Erin Rivers of College Heights, for her hard work in furthering the cause of student success initiatives. A cash award is given to a charity of the recipient's choice and Ms. Rivers identified the breakfast club at College Heights as her charity.

Superintendent Kelly thanked all the winners and their families and friends who were in attendance. Thanks were also extended to the Intervention Committee for their commitment to students.

Trustees congratulated the award recipients and the commitment of the teachers and support staff who go above and beyond the expectations of their jobs in order to create those fundamental relationships that have contributed to the students' success.

CADENCE PROGRAM

Teachers Ainslie Thomson, Robert Conroy and Chris Fiddes provided an overview of the Cadence Program. It is an interdisciplinary program for at risk youth that was developed out of alternate education programming at Centennial as a student success initiative. It recognizes the fact that many students do not function well in a conventional classroom. Four credits are achieved at an off-site location as part of an interdisciplinary package. Assignments are built around the six pillars: character, integrity, leadership, community, resiliency, and competence. Community partnerships have been developed and include Muskoka Woods and Hope House (where the program is housed). Many outreach programs allow students to earn volunteer and co-op hours. The Larry Pearson Foundation funds part of the program.

Many successes are achieved including dramatically improved attendance and engagement and an improved level of work completion. Students will transition back to their home school with one on one consultation with guidance counselors and others in place, as well as scheduled meetings at Cadence two half days each month.

Stronger partnerships with all schools in Guelph and a clearer application process are being developed and students from John F. Ross, GCVI and Centennial will participate in the program next year.

A brief video highlighting the program was played for Trustees and Melissa, a student from the program presented an overview of her experience with the program. She stressed the sense of community and equality and the ability of the teachers to help them achieve and change the lives of many students in the class, including her own.

In response to questions from Trustees, it was reported that the program will continue to be delivered at Hope House and that the maximum number of students each semester is limited to 24. The vision of program is to have the students graduate from grade 11 in the program and then return to their home school to serve as at risk

leaders and mentors for younger students.

Trustees were invited to attend the Cadence graduation and celebration at Hope House on June 21st. Details will be posted on the Trustee Conference.

In response to a question from Trustee Gohn regarding the possibility of offering a similar program in some of the smaller more rural secondary schools within the district, Superintendent Kelly reported that Cadence was introduced as the result of an innovative idea initiating with the teachers. The program was presented at a recent family of schools meeting and Center Dufferin did attend the Cadence Open House Day.

Recommendation #1:

Trustee Busuttill moved that the verbal Cadence Program Report be received.

The motion carried.

DRAFT BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT 2013

Ms. Tracy Lindsay, Principal of Program, reviewed the Draft Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) 2011-2014. She noted that it will also be vetted through the family of schools and SEAC next week. The UGDSB is entering the last year of their four-year plan. Changes and new inclusions were highlighted and reflect changes from the Ministry and within the Board. A final version will be presented in September. The draft will be sent to Trustees electronically and the final version will be posted on the website when completed.

In response to a question from Trustee Cooper regarding the development of a framework to establish the interconnectivity of the various pillars, it was explained that it is being addressed through the inclusion of the word "enquiry" in the BIPSA. Professional development for teachers also outlines the enquiry process and sends them back to the classroom to look at the larger picture.

Trustee Busuttill questioned if there were plans within the BIPSA for long term transition of students out of the school system, e.g. developmentally delayed students. Ms. Lindsay indicated that she would take the issue back to the committee, and noted that in addition to what is embedded in the BIPSA, the Special Education Department, among others, develop a more focused separate plan, including specialized goals.

In response to a question from Trustee Moziar, it was explained that as part of the strategy in the 10 year plan is to collect data and examine the specifics within it that relates to retention if FI and determine factors that impact it including the need for special education support

Recommendation # 2:

Trustee Bailey moved that the Draft Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement 2013 be received.

The motion carried.

MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE AND PLANS FOR 2013-2014

Dr. Lynn Woodford, Manager of Mental Health/Addiction Programs and Services, presented a brief overview of the work undertaken since September 2012 as part of the mental health and addiction strategy. She highlighted the resource mapping results, the mental health and addictions strategy vision, current developments, and work with community partners.

Dr. Woodford outlined the plans for 2013-2014 which include the roll out of the vision on mental health and addictions and the administrators' and educators' guide. Collaborative conferencing is planned with community partners. Work will continue to build suicide prevention capacity and will be undertaken with students to decrease stigma and build awareness. Development of pathways to care will also continue.

In response to questions from Trustees, Dr. Woodford noted that there appears to be an increase in some mental health issues, in part due to more awareness of the issue and ability to seek support. A higher level of stress is experienced by children and youth than in the past resulting in a recommendation from the Student Senate to focus on mental wellbeing and decreasing overall stress experienced by students. Dr. Woodford also reported that consideration is being given to adding a few mental health questions to surveys currently undertaken within the system. The issue of self-harm has been identified as a result of resource mapping and is included in the work being done.

Recommendation # 3:

Trustee Moziar moved that the verbal Mental Health Update and Plans for 2013-2014 report be received.

The motion carried.

OPSBA REPORT

Trustee Busuttill provided a verbal OPSBA report. The Annual General Meeting is being held in Huntsville this week and the major topic of discussion will be the provincial bargaining structure as presented previously to the Board.

Trustee Bailey reported the death of Hamilton Wentworth District School Board Trustee and OPSA Director, Mr. Bob Barlow. Condolences have been sent on behalf of the UGDSB.

Recommendation # 4 :

Trustee Fairbairn moved that this committee recommend to the board that the OPSBA report be received.

The motion carried.

REPORT FROM STUDENT TRUSTEES

Student Trustees Brown and Sampson provided a summary of activities that took place in May and will take place in June at the Secondary Schools throughout the Board. In addition the development of a Student Council Handbook was reported and an overview of the recent OSTA/AECO Annual General Meeting was given. The 2013 survey for students, parents and educators is available for completion at www.studentsurvey.ca and Trustees were encouraged to complete it.

Trustees thanked the Student Trustees for their demonstrated leadership and contributions and expressed pride in their growth both within the Board and provincially.

Recommendation # 5:

Trustee Bailey moved that this Committee recommend to the Board that the Student Trustee Report be received.

The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS**By-law Review Sub-Committee**

Trustee Borden reported the By-law Review Sub-Committee has completed their work and a Caucus meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11, 2013 to present the information to the Board.

Every Day Hero Award

Trustee Borden moved, seconded by Trustee Topping, that the Board approve the awarding of a 2013 Everyday Hero Award to Sarah Blake, a bus driver with Stock Transportation.

On May 14, 2013, Sarah Blake, a bus driver with Stock Transportation, saved the life of 9 year old student from Primrose P.S., by performing the Heimlich manoeuvre and successfully dislodging an obstruction from the child's windpipe.

The motion carried.

IN CAMERA**ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Busutil moved that this Committee adjourn at 10:25 p.m. to report to the Board.

The motion carried.