

## **Upper Grand District School Board**

### **Program Committee**

#### **Minutes**

**Tuesday, February 1, 2022**

The Program Committee of Upper Grand District School Board met on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, virtually and in the Board Room commencing at 7:00 p.m.

The Chairperson Trustee Lustgarten Evoy presided, and Trustees Bailey, Bedi, Busuttil, Edwards, Foley, MacNeil, and Topping were present with regrets from Trustee Campbell and Ross. Student Trustees Emilie Hill and Vikasni Kuganesan were also in attendance. Also in attendance were Director of Education Sovran, Executive Superintendent McDonald, and Superintendents Hamilton, Heaslip, Lindsay, McCutcheon, Taha, and Zen.

#### **Agenda**

Trustee Topping moved that the agenda be approved as printed.

**The motion carried.**

#### **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Trustee Busuttil moved that the minutes of the meeting held on January 4, 2022 be approved as printed.

**The motion carried.**

#### **Report from Student Trustees**

Student Trustees Vikasni Kuganesan and Emilie Hill extended a special thank you to all the teachers and staff for the hard work done to allow students to return to a semester system which brings students one step closer to familiarity. The student trustees acknowledged the difficult times everyone is experiencing, and that in times like these, it is extremely important to have empathy and compassion for each other. Wishes were expressed to individuals who are celebrating Lunar New Year, for a happy new year of prosperity and happiness, and also recognized the importance of February being Black History Month – reflecting on the positive and traumatic pasts that Black people have

endured throughout history. The January Student Senate meeting had 15 students attending and 10 of the 12 secondary schools were represented. Superintendent McCutcheon was welcomed at this meeting and he spoke about the 2022/23 school year calendar and the students were invited to provide feedback about the calendar. Mental Health and Addictions Lead Jenny Marino also attended the meeting where she provided a Mental Health Moment regarding the topic of empathy under the Umbrella Project. Representatives of the environmental Take2 movement also attended the meeting and introduced senators to this environmental initiative. Student senators were also informed about the 2022/23 Student Trustee Election which will be taking place during the February Student Senate Meeting as in compliance with Ministry requirements. Student senators were also notified about the option to provide feedback on the legislation about single use plastics prohibition and encouraged senators to send any opinions which would then be forwarded to the Trustee Climate Emergency Committee (TCEC). There were discussions about the TDSB Mark Freeze and senators were told that the students' marks should not be adversely affected by the two week remote period following the winter break. Regarding the potential Pride Flag mandate, senators were notified that there is work being done surrounding the mandate and they look forward to hearing updates and discussing the process with Gerard Walker, to create the mandate and make sure that it is indeed equitable, at the Student Senate Meeting in March. The Student Trustees expressed excitement to network, learn, and contribute with peers from across the province in the Ontario Student Trustees' Association and look forward to attending the conference.

### **Recommendation # 1**

Trustee MacNeil moved that the February Student Trustee verbal report be received, with thanks.

**The motion carried.**

### **Mental Health Update**

Mental Health and Addiction Lead Jenny Marino shared updates on the Parent Webinars series that have been happening and supporting parents across Upper Grand DSB communities in Guelph, Wellington County, and Dufferin. Some upcoming webinars that were shared were Nurturing Resilience Through Community Involvement and the live streaming of Screenagers Film. Ms. Marino also shared an update on student facing mandatory training sessions on anti-human sex trafficking which will be an annual delivery of Anti-Human Sex Trafficking (AHST) module to all grade 7 and grade 10 students. This is part of Upper Grand DSB developing policy and the role

Upper Grand will be taking in supporting students with this education on a regular basis in a structured and consistent way. Ms. Marino highlighted Ensuring System Success (ESS) which is a community collaboration that has existed in various forms for over a decade which began out of concern for students who were not in school. The group meets every month and discusses complex cases for recommendations, ideas, and creative thinking prior to going to service resolution as well as to explore system challenges relating to pathways to care among other topics. Every year, School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) data capture takes place and Ms. Marino shared that the September to December 2021 capture was for mental health professionals. This data captured typically look at the number of students supported, number of referrals to community, percentage online versus in-person sessions and more. Trustees asked questions of clarification.

### **Recommendation # 2**

Trustee Topping moved that the verbal update on Mental Health be received.

**The motion carried.**

### **Black Heritage, Black Brilliance, Black Futures Month**

Equity and Inclusion Curriculum Lead K-12 Jessica Rowden shared that responsively and with critical thought, students driving this work in the Upper Grand DSB requested that the month be named Black Heritage, Black Brilliance and Black Futures month in 2021, and as such, continued with the name this year and hopefully into the future as well. This intentional name represents a balanced approach to understanding that the history, reality, and future of people of the African diaspora involves immense racism and injustice including slavery as well as pre-slavery history, excellence, social justice action and positive contribution. Student Black Affinity Groups such as Guelph CVI Black Student Union and Centre Dufferin DHS Black Chapter, along with Upper Grand DSB Black Staff Advisory Group, Curriculum Leads and Coaches, and Early Learning Team were recognized contributors to the work being done at Upper Grand DSB. In addition to board connections Upper Grand DSB is also currently working closely with community connections such as Guelph Black Heritage Society, Dufferin County Canadian Black Association, and County of Wellington Museum, just to name a few. Critical considerations are explored when addressing identity and equity based topics before jumping into the work and more information for internal staff can be found on the Critical Considerations page of the Equity Hub site. Ms. Rowden shared a calendar/choice board of events, resources, and opportunities available to support learning every day of the month for the entire month of February. Ms. Rowden

highlighted some spotlights, resources, and live events on the calendar and noted other than the events that will be live, opportunities and resources are provided past the month of February and throughout the entire school year. These resources and the calendar can be found on the internal Equity Hub site and are also communicated out to Equity Reps and Administrators.

### **Recommendation # 3**

Trustee Bailey moved that the verbal report for Black Heritage, Black Brilliance, Black Futures Month be received.

**The motion carried.**

### **Elementary Remote Program 2022-2023**

Executive Superintendent of Education McDonald and Superintendent of Education Heaslip presented a refresh to the current Elementary Remote Program for next fall. The process of planning for next year has started in order to ensure communication is available for families and students ahead of time and also to comply with staffing timelines which start in the next few weeks. As Upper Grand DSB moves out of pandemic planning, it is anticipated that the demographic of the current elementary remote program will shift from those concerned about COVID-19, to families who prefer to continue with remote learning due to a variety of reasons. Moving forward, Upper Grand DSB will explore options of what a blended model may look like in the future years and to best determine a remote program that meets the needs of all students.

One of the changes for the 2022-2023 school year will include administrative support that is currently located at Willow Road PS, and that provides the background in the infrastructure for the remote program, will be moved to Erin PS. Erin PS is an ideal location and would become the administrative hub of the elementary remote program. This refresh to the program ensures Upper Grand DSB has a central staff in a location with space for administrative teams and educator staff who may wish to work on site.

Similar to the current school year process, students will be asked to commit to either in-person or remote learning for the course of the full school year during the second week of June 2022. Administrators will continue to work with families whose personal circumstances may change over the summer and a second confirmation during the third week of August 2022 will take place which will provide opportunities for families to return to in-person learning and into remote programming as space permits. The program options of the Elementary Remote Program (ERP) will be similar and continue

to depend on the demand and viability. A minor change in how asynchronous options will be offered to students will take place, as the number of registered students is expected to continue to decline. These students would be blended in classes with synchronous students and the difference would be that the students would access the program being offered asynchronously through their Google Classroom and not be required to participate in the live instruction component. This would meet the current requirements set out in PPM 164 and enable families who prefer this option to still be registered within Upper Grand DSB and participate in the programming.

Input and feedback were collected from families, staff, and students participating in the program, to determine what has been successful and what challenges may exist in the success of the remote program. Online surveys were completed twice last year, parent information/sharing meetings were held, and opportunities were provided for staff at the end of semester meetings to provide feedback and suggestions. Executive Superintendent McDonald shared slides that provided a snapshot of some of the feedback received to date and how it has impacted the supports put in place and the delivery model that is being continuously tweaked heading into the next couple of years. Questions of clarification were answered, and thanks were expressed.

#### **Recommendation # 4**

Trustee Busuttill moved that the verbal report for Elementary Remote Program be received.

**The motion carried.**

#### **OPSBA Report**

Trustee MacNeil reported the following:

##### Public Education Symposium

The symposium took place on Friday, January 28<sup>th</sup> and the recordings of the presentations will be made available by OPSBA and will be shared with trustees. A partial summary of the presentations has been shared with trustees in a separate document and if trustees have any other notes on workshops to share, they can be added to the collection.

##### Central West Regional Meeting

The regional meeting took place on Friday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, immediately following the

Public Education Symposium.

Election of Regional Vice-Chair: Martha MacNeil, Upper Grand DSB

Election of Policy Development Work Group Member: Don Werden, Grand Erie DSB

Election of Policy Development Work Group Alternate: Kathy McDonald, Peel DSB

The agenda was very full and covered a wide range of subjects. All of this information will be captured in the Central West minutes that trustees will receive from Carla Garbas prior to the next meeting.

Among the agenda items were: an update on labour relations and discussion of items that had been part of central and local bargaining in previous rounds of negotiations, a preliminary discussion of the Annual OPSBA Priorities, and updates from the Regional Chair, the Education Program Work Group, the Policy Development Work Group, and Project Compass.

Due to the very robust discussion of the above, and the desire to adhere to the scheduled meeting end, it was decided not to share Board updates in person. The reports from each Board will be included in the Central West minutes and the report for the Upper Grand DSB that was submitted is attached to this document.

Trustees were advised of the upcoming OPSBA Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium taking place virtually on April 28, 2022. More information about the symposium will be emailed to trustees when it is available.

Trustees were reminded that the next Central West regional meeting is Saturday, April 9, 2022. It is still to be decided whether this meeting will be in person or virtual.

### **Recommendation # 5**

Trustee Edwards moved that the report titled "OPSBA" dated February 1, 2022 be received.

**The motion carried.**

**Other Business – nil report**

**Adjournment**

Trustee Foley moved that this Committee adjourn at 8:32 p.m. to report to the Board.

**The motion carried.**

**This document is available in alternate formats upon request.**