

Upper Grand District School Board
Board Meeting
Tuesday, March 22, 2022
Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Upper Grand District School Board was held virtually and in person on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, in the Board Room at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, starting at 7:00 p.m. Trustees Bailey, Bedi, Busuttil, Edwards, Foley, Lustgarten Evoy, MacNeil, Ross, and Topping were present with regrets from Trustee Campbell. Student Trustees Emilie Hill and Vikasni Kuganesan were also in attendance.

1. Traditional Greeting – Student Trustee Emilie Hill

2. Opening Prayer / Reading – Trustee Ross

Trustee Ross shared a quote about mediation.

3. Condolences

Trustee Busuttil, Chair, reported that condolences were sent on behalf of the Board to the following: the family of Marilynne Lachance Ellis, Elementary Supply Teacher; Leslie Mifsud, Teacher at Victory PS, on the loss of her mother-in-law.

4. Good News/Director's Report

Director of Education Sovran provided some reflections, highlights and good news items that took place in Upper Grand DSB during the month of March.

School visits in March included elementary and secondary schools, as well as Upper Grand DSB Education and Community Partnership Programs. Director Sovran shared the visits highlighted the variety of ways that the Upper Grand responds to the diverse needs of students and how appreciative Upper Grand DSB is of the board's strong community relationships.

Centre Wellington DHS Teams to Return to CyberTitan Nationals

For yet another year, teams from Centre Wellington DHS are heading to the CyberTitan National Student Cybersecurity Competition Finals in May. Both the school's Senior Co-Ed team, FalconTech Post Mortem, coached by CWDHS teacher Tim King, and the school's all-female team MORPHEUS, coached by CWDHS teacher Eric Greig, will represent the Upper Grand DSB, Ontario, and eastern Canada at this year's cybersecurity finals. The national finals will be held virtually on May 16-18th and Centre Wellington's cybersecurity teams will be ready to compete against top specialist STEM

schools across Canada. Everyone on both teams are excited for the challenge and the opportunity to represent the Upper Grand, Ontario and all of eastern Canada at this year's event.

Mitchell Woods PS Teacher Nominated for the Music Teacher of the Year Award

Teacher Kelly Stronach from Mitchell Woods PS has been nominated for the 2022 MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award. Kelly is one of just five nominees from across Canada up for this year's award. MusiCounts is a national music education charity. Each year, the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year Award recognizes an inspirational Canadian music educator's impact on students and music education.

Empowerment Week

From March 7th-10th, schools across the Upper Grand DSB celebrated the return of Empowerment Day, which this year was expanded to Empowerment Week. Empowerment Day was initiated and developed by two very passionate students from the Drayton Heights Student Council in 2015. Elora Public School's "Students Create Change" group continued this annual event, which invites students from grades 4 to 12 in the Upper Grand DSB to participate. This week's events were held virtually, with students participating in their classrooms. Classes picked from a wide selection of speakers this year included: Canadian figure-skating icon Tessa Virtue, Water advocate Autumn Peltier, Human rights activists and authors, Amanda Jette-Knox and Alexis Knox, Humboldt Broncos accident survivor, Ryan Straschnitzki, and many more. Empowerment Week covered a wide range of topics including self-worth, human rights, mental health, and women in sports.

5. Confirmation of the Agenda

Trustee Busuttil requested an amendment to the agenda to include a new item # 10: Presentation by Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health from WDG Public Health.

RESOLUTION #22-67: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved, seconded by Trustee Topping, that the agenda be confirmed as amended.

The motion carried.

6. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

7. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting Held February 22, 2022

RESOLUTION #22-68: Trustee Topping moved, seconded by Trustee Lustgarten Evoy, that the minutes of the meeting held February 22, 2022, and the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held immediately prior to the Board meeting, be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

8. Ratification of Business Transacted by the Committee of the Whole In Camera

RESOLUTION #22-69: Trustee Bailey moved, seconded by Trustee Topping, that the business transacted by the Committee of the Whole In Camera be now ratified by the Board.

The motion carried.

9. Motion to Rise and Sit in Committee of the Whole

RESOLUTION #22-70: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved, seconded by Trustee Foley, that the Board rise and sit in Committee of the Whole with the Chairperson presiding.

The motion carried.

10. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Presentation - Dr. Tenenbaum

Dr. Tenenbaum, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health's Associate Medical Officer of Health, presented an update on the current COVID-19 situation in our community.

Dr. Tenenbaum shared an overview on the following topics: how schools were supported through the pandemic; protective guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education; recognizing that multiple layers of measures help prevent the spread of the virus; progress made in the local COVID-19 vaccine program; transitioned approach to COVID-19 from a crisis phase to a transition phase; and addressing the community's health needs.

Dr. Tenenbaum reported in addition to the ongoing work that is being done to monitor and manage COVID-19 in the community, the team at WDG Public Health recognizes how disruptive the past two years have been for the school community. Dr. Tenenbaum reiterated COVID-19 is still around us and to continue to follow the measures that are known to work such as getting vaccinated, wearing a mask, and maintaining physical distancing. He expressed to be kind and thoughtful to those around you, recognizing

that everyone has had different experiences during this pandemic and that each person will move through this transition only as quickly as their individual situations dictate.

Trustees asked questions of clarification and thanks were expressed to Dr. Tenenbaum, Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health for his presentation and for his time taken to answer questions.

RESOLUTION #22-71: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the WDG Public Health COVID-19 Update be received.

The motion carried.

11. Delegation Regarding the Continuation with Universal Masking in Upper Grand DSB Schools

Parent Representative Andrea Chittle thanked trustees and board staff for the opportunity to speak about the importance of continuing with universal masking in schools and hopeful that the Board can take all available actions in order to support the use of universal masking in schools at this time. Dr. Chittle is a family physician who has been very involved in the pandemic response in Guelph and has worked at the COVID Assessment Centre and at the mass vaccination clinics. She informed the Children's Health Coalition, which represents children's health organizations in Ontario, have recommended that mask mandates be maintained in schools for now and that universal masking is a simple and effective tool that protects students, education workers, and families. While community COVID transmission is high, vaccination rates remain relatively low among 5 to 11 year olds, and children under 5 are not yet eligible for vaccines, masks continue to be an important layered strategy to reduce the spread of COVID in schools. Dr. Chittle shared that emerging evidence tells us that universal masking is more effective than voluntary masking, and offers the best protection to students, families, and education staff who may be more vulnerable to serious illness and death from COVID-19. After 2 years of disruption, she believes there is broad consensus about the importance of prioritizing stable in-person learning and by reducing the spread of COVID in classrooms, continued universal mask use supports the achievement of this goal. Dr. Chittle urged Upper Grand DSB to strongly recommend continued universal masking in schools at this time to protect students and those around them. Trustees asked questions of clarification and thanked the delegate.

RESOLUTION #22-72: Trustee Foley moved to receive the delegation.

The motion carried.

12. Response to Delegation

Trustee Foley fully supported the delegate and shared the same concerns and asked Director of Education Sovran if he could provide further explanation of the situation from a legal point of view. Appreciating that school boards are governed through very specific and interwoven legislation, Director Sovran indicated when the direction from the province was provided on March 9th, Upper Grand DSB immediately sought legal counsel in terms of advice. Director Sovran informed that the directions currently in place at Upper Grand DSB are based on that legal counsel advice.

13. Program Committee

RESOLUTION #22-73: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the minutes of the Program Committee held March 1, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

RESOLUTION #22-74: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that:

1. The verbal update from Student Trustees be received, with thanks.
2. The verbal report for Mental Health Update be received.
3. The verbal report for Student Data be received.
4. The verbal report for eLearning and Remote Learning 2022-2023 Online Graduation Requirement be received.
5. The report titled "OPSBA report" dated March 1, 2022 be received.

The motion carried.

14. Business Operations Committee

RESOLUTION #22-75: Trustee MacNeil moved that the minutes of the Business Operations Committee held March 8, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

RESOLUTION #22-76: Trustee MacNeil moved that:

1. The report entitled Trustee Determination and Distribution for the Upper Grand District School Board for 2022 dated March 8, 2022 be received.

2. The Upper Grand District School Board approve the determination of 10 trustee positions for the board, the same number who were elected to the board at the 2006, 2010, 2014, and 2018 regular elections.
3. The Status Quo (Option A) trustee distribution, as outlined in Appendix C of the report entitled Trustee Determination and Distribution for the Upper Grand District School Board for 2022 dated March 8, 2022, be approved and submitted, no later than April 4, 2022 to the Ministry of Education, the election clerk for all municipalities within the board's jurisdiction; and the secretary of every other board that is wholly or partially within the board's area of jurisdiction.
4. The Board approve that no areas in the jurisdiction of the Upper Grand District School Board be designated as low population areas.
5. The minutes of the Trustee Climate Emergency Committee (TCEC) held February 15, 2022 be received and considered.
6. The verbal report for Hyland Heights Elementary School Addition – Tender Results and Update be received.
7. The verbal Transportation Update be received.

The motion carried.

15. Special Education Advisory Committee

RESOLUTION #22-77: Trustee Topping moved that the minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee held March 9, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

16. Policy Management Committee

RESOLUTION #22-78: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the minutes of the Policy Management Committee held March 1, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

RESOLUTION #22-79: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that:

1. Policy 321 – Copyright – Fair Dealing be approved.
2. Policy 406 – Health and Safety be approved.
3. Policy 417 – Violence in the Workplace be approved.

The motion carried.

17. COVID-19 Monthly Update

Director Sovran began by thanking Dr. Tenenbaum and the entire team at Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health for the ongoing continuous support, for always being available to ask clarifying questions and obtain guidance. Director Sovran encouraged all members of Upper Grand school communities to treat others with kindness and respect, to be supportive and accepting as we are all in this together.

Executive Superintendent McDonald, and Superintendents Heaslip, and Lindsay collectively presented the monthly COVID-19 update. An overview of 3 key areas were provided:

1. COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidance

- Screening and Verification - Updated Case and Contact Management
- Protective Measures Continuing
 - Daily COVID screening
 - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting
 - Ventilation, CO2 testing, 2500+ HEPA filters
 - Absentee reporting to Ministry and WDGPH
 - Protocols to manage individuals ill at school
 - Distribution of rapid tests
 - Continued access to PPE

2. What has Changed?

- Masks, Cohorting and Distancing
 - Ministry announced effective March 21st mandatory masking will no longer be required for Ontario schools
 - Masking indoors continues to be strongly encouraged
 - Cohorting and distancing are no longer required in schools and shared spaces can be fully utilized without distancing
- Transportation
 - Cohorting and distancing students on transportation are no longer required

- Vaccination Disclosure Policies
 - School boards are no longer required to have COVID-19 vaccine disclosure policies in place, or collect proof of COVID-19 vaccinations or medical exemptions
- Rapid Antigen Tests for staff/students
 - Unvaccinated staff or visitors to schools are no longer required to undertake rapid antigen screening 3x per week
- Access to Schools or Board Sites
 - Procedures that were in place to Policy 104-B Access to School and Board Buildings, have been repealed
 - Visitors to schools are no longer required to show proof of vaccination
 - Visitors to schools are still required to sign in, to track and keep record of all visitors
 - Graduations, celebrations, and assemblies can continue to be planned
 - Spectators for school sports will be allowed

3. Elementary/Secondary Updates

- Mental Health Supports
- Highlighted work this month will focus on supporting students and families returning to school under the new guidelines and lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy raised a question asking why Upper Grand DSB can't mandate a masking policy as other organizations are. Director of Education Sovran clarified Upper Grand DSB is governed by the Education Act and the various regulations associated with that act and that Upper Grand is not a standalone organization that can make their own rules. Any direction that would come from the Ministry of Education, the school board would be required to follow.

Trustee Foley placed the following motion:

RESOLUTION #22-80: That the Board strongly recommend masking in our workplaces and schools, and that we work diligently with our education stakeholders and partners to get this message across to everyone.

The motion carried.

RESOLUTION #22-81: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the verbal monthly COVID-19 update be received.

The motion carried.

18. Motion to Rescind the August 18, 2020 Resolutions as Printed

Trustees expressed their desire to keep mask mandates in place, while acknowledging that the Board does not have the independent authority to do so.

Trustee Foley expressed his disappointment with the Ministry of Education and the Chief Medical Officer. While he understands the legislative context of Ontario school boards, he is frustrated with the Board's lack of legal authority to establish a masking policy and to be able to enforce a policy. Trustee Foley thanked Director Sovran and the Board for responding immediately after the provincial announcement to secure legal counsel and guidance and for working with all the trustees to do everything that could be done to create a welcoming, safe, learning and workplace environment. Trustee Foley added that it is his view that the Government of Ontario is acting irresponsibly when they order Ontario school boards to rescind all masking requirements that will most likely aid in the explosion of future COVID cases across communities. He noted, presently the world is experiencing another more contagious wave of the next variant and the logic should be to wait, and proceed slowly but school boards are being directed to ignore the need to keep masking policies that are in place, at the cost of losing the Board's ability to run Upper Grand DSB.

Trustee MacNeil stated that if she were able to vote, making the best choice for all members of the Upper Grand DSB educational community, she would absolutely be voting to maintain the mask mandate because she believes the scientists and medical experts who say it is too soon. Trustee MacNeil will be voting in favour of this motion but does so against her better judgement.

RESOLUTION #22-82: Trustee Foley moved to Rescind the August 18, 2020 Motion as Printed:

1. The UGDSB require masks to be worn indoors for ALL students, staff and visitors allowing for appropriate medical exemptions.
2. School staff explore alternatives such as face shields for students unable to wear masks.

3. Staff approach compliance with parents and younger students in JK-3 with a focus on education.
4. There be a progressive discipline for students not complying.

and That:

1. The UGDSB require masks to be worn on buses for ALL students, staff and visitors allowing for appropriate medical exemptions.
2. School staff explore alternatives such as face shields for students unable to wear masks.
3. Staff approach compliance with parents and younger students in JK-3 with a focus on education.
4. There be progressive discipline for students not complying.

The motion carried.

Chair Busuttill clarified that with the defeat of the original motion from 2020 that the requirement to wear masks in the UGDSB going forward has been removed.

19. Learning Recovery Action Plan for Elementary and Secondary

In February, the Ministry of Education developed a Learning Recovery Action Plan that invests in expanded tutoring supports that will assist students as they recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Upper Grand DSB has taken these directions and developed a plan which is data informed and will be delivered by Upper Grand teachers. This comprehensive plan will serve as a pilot and going forward, Upper Grand DSB can continue to provide the necessary supports for those students who are experiencing learning challenges.

Elementary Plan

- Focus on reading
- Interdepartmental approach to determine areas of greatest need for supporting students in this school year
- April to June plan will help to determine next steps for Learning Recovery for the summer and for the 2022-2023 school year
- Will also consider effective teaching strategies for both in person and virtual options

- Incorporate collaboration between school staff, parents, and community partners
- Based on data it was determined the focus of the reading support program for the remainder of the year would be students in grades 1-3
- Proposal for a smaller grade 7/8 program that would support the consolidation of literacy skills for some identified students before transition to secondary school

Superintendent Lindsay introduced the Intervention Model which will include the following operational strategies: an in person reading support teacher; training in the use of high yield instructional strategies; the provision of key resources to be used to support instructional practices; and opportunities to share observations, data and outcomes between the reading support teacher, classroom teacher, special education resource teachers (SERT), school administration, and parents. Additionally, reading support teachers will focus on the listed instructional strategies within the intervention model which will include explicit teaching and feedback, small group instructions, targeted learning goals, structured three part lesson format, continuous formative assessment, and intensive, systematic instruction. In addition to the April through June intervention model, Upper Grand DSB will build on the summer camp structure provided previously and it will be an in-person, 3 week summer camp with an enhanced focus on early literacy and numeracy skills with a possibility of an extension through remote support. A grade seven and eight project will be offered that will allow the elementary and secondary curriculum teams as well as the special education team to work together and the focus of this project will be to use data to identify students in grades seven and eight who are struggling with reading and to provide them with extra support before they leave elementary school. Next steps would be the hiring of staff and to establish the number of students/sites to be supported based on staffing availability. The intent is to gather and analyze the data gathered between April and June and use that information to enhance the summer program and determine changes to the program for 2022-2023 school year.

Secondary Plan

- Phase 1 from April to June 2022
- Focus on literacy and numeracy
- A credit rescue model for students struggling
- Teacher delivered model that will provide individual and small group support
- Use learning strategies from GLE course
- Blended – use Google classroom, online after school learning

Superintendent Hamilton also provided an overview of the remaining two phases with respect to the plans in Upper Grand secondary schools. Phase 2 from July – August, will be offering GLE/GLS, which are both learning strategies courses, via online learning

this summer and in addition, a possible pilot in North Wellington. Phase 3 from September to December, will be looking at the most successful versions and pieces of the plan and will carry it forward into the fall of next year and beyond. The secondary plan will use a variety of data sources to prioritize students who would benefit from additional supports to increase student engagement, achievement, and ultimately, credit accumulation. The plan is aligned with other important priorities of Upper Grand such as culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy, changes in special education, assessment, and a focus on well-being and build system capacity.

Trustees asked questions of clarification and expressed thanks.

RESOLUTION #22-83: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the verbal Learning Recovery Action Plan for Elementary and Secondary report be received.

The motion carried.

20. Staff Retirements and Resignations

Executive Officer of Human Resources Pyke presented the Staff Retirements and Resignations report dated March 22, 2022.

RESOLUTION #22-84: Trustee Topping moved that the Staff Retirements and Resignations report Appendix A and Appendix B dated March 22, 2022 be received.

The motion carried.

21. Board Correspondence

Trustee Foley received and read a letter from the Guelph and District Labour Council and requested that it be recorded in the minutes.

Dear Trustee Foley,

I am writing on behalf of the Guelph & District Labour Council to express our concern with the Board's decision to rescind the mandatory masking policy as of March 21, 2022.

The Guelph Labour Council has education affiliates as part of our delegation (ETFO, OSSTF, CUPE) whose members work in Upper Grand schools. Some of our delegates are parents or relatives of students who attend Upper Grand schools. Many of these members have expressed their concern with the Board's decision not to extend the masking policy. They feel that it is too soon to make

this decision and the Board should have extended the policy until at least mid-April.

There is a new COVID variant has been detected. Many students and staff are returning to schools after traveling and socializing during March Break. This inevitably will result in a rise in COVID cases in our schools and community. Lifting the masking mandate poses an immediate and unnecessary threat to the health and safety of education workers and students.

The Labour Council is requesting that the Trustees vote to extend the mandatory masking policies until at least mid-April. We have learned from legal counsel that school boards, as employers, have the right to adopt policies, subject to those policies being reasonable. It is very likely that a continued masking policy would be deemed reasonable by an arbitrator. The Ontario Science Table as well as Sick Kids has advised that it is too soon to lift the masking mandate.

I strongly urge that the Trustees take our concerns into consideration at tonight's Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hesch
President, Guelph & District Labour Council
Vice-President/Chief Negotiator, Upper Grand ETFO

Trustee Foley expressed his appreciation to the Guelph and District Labour Council for sharing their thoughts and concerns with the Board. Trustees Busuttil and Foley will work collaboratively in writing a response to the letter.

RESOLUTION #22-85: Trustee Topping moved that the Board Correspondence dated March 22, 2022, be received.

The motion carried.

22. Trustee Questions and Reports

Trustee Busuttil informed that a process/procedure will be created in the near future, where the Chair and Vice-Chair will submit a report to the Board each month.

The first item on the Chair/Vice-Chair report for this evening was regarding the Trustee Climate Emergency Committee. A question around capital was raised on a Minister's teleconference on February 17th, the Minister was to get back with information at a subsequent meeting, but this has not happened yet. Trustee Busuttil shared that a letter was sent to the Minister, MP's, MPP's, and every single mayor in Wellington-Dufferin with a personal cover sheet urging action on climate. The mayors of

Rockwood, Orangeville, Erin, and Puslinch Council have asked for additional information, so that they can build on their advocacy.

Trustee Busuttil raised executive compensation on the Chair's call with the Minister and has had several meetings with other Chairs of Boards regarding this item.

Trustee Busuttil acknowledged Vice-Chair Lustgarten Evoy and her work with the Upper Grand Learning Foundation. There will be a gala, the first fund raising effort for the Upper Learning Foundation, on May 27th at the Grand Way Events Centre in Elora.

Trustee Busuttil recognized that this was Superintendent of Program Lindsay's last board meeting as she is retiring at the end of the month. Thanks were expressed for her phenomenal leadership and the developments and changes she has brought to the program department.

23. OPSBA Report

Trustee MacNeil reminded trustees of the following:

Next meeting of the Central West Regional Group for OPSBA will be virtual on Saturday April 9th from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Trustees were asked to RSVP to either Carla or Donna.

The OPSBA Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium will be virtual on April 28th and information can be found on the OPSBA website.

The nominations for the OPSBA elected positions at the AGM are open. The nomination deadline is May 10th at 4:40 p.m. The AGM will be taking place on June 9th to 11th in Ottawa.

RESOLUTION #22-86: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the verbal OPSBA report be received.

The motion carried.

24. Dates of Future Meetings

RESOLUTION #22-87: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the April 2022 schedule for Board and Standing Committee Meetings be approved as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Program Committee | April 5, 2022 |
| Business Operations | April 12, 2022 |
| Board Meeting | April 26, 2022 |

The motion carried.

Director of Education Sovran added the following to the Dates of Future Meetings:

Multi-Year Plan Working Sessions:

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Monday, April 19, 2022, | Virtual, 5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, April 27, 2022 | Board Room, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday, May 17, 2022 | Virtual, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. |

RESOLUTION #22-88: Trustee MacNeil moved that the Dates of Future Meetings dated March 22, 2022 be received. with the above noted additions.

The motion carried.

25. Motion to Rise and Report to the Board

RESOLUTION #22-89: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the Committee of the Whole rise and report to the Board.

The motion carried.

26. Ratification of Business

RESOLUTION #22-90: Trustee Bailey moved, seconded by Trustee MacNeil that the business transacted by the Committee of the Whole be now ratified by the Board.

The motion carried.

27. Adjournment

RESOLUTION #22-91: Trustee Foley moved, seconded by Trustee MacNeil that the Board adjourn and this meeting now close at 9:22 p.m.

The motion carried.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.