

Upper Grand District School Board
Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 24, 2022
Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Upper Grand District School Board was held virtually and in person on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, in the Board Room at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, starting at 7:00 p.m. All Trustees were present. Student Trustee Vikasni Kuganesan and Emilie Hill were also in attendance.

- 1. Traditional Greeting – Student Trustee Vikasni Kuganesan**
- 2. Opening Prayer / Reading – Trustee Bailey**

Trustee Bailey acknowledged the fear and uncertainty that is out in the world today and shared if anyone is feeling unsettled, uncertain, fearful, or anxious, that you are far from alone.

- 3. Condolences – Nil report**
- 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 May.

Director Sovran's school visits in May were across Upper Grand visiting secondary and elementary schools in Dufferin, North Wellington, and Guelph. Director Sovran expressed how great it was to see the walls filled with student voices and to see the return of many of the opportunities that have been impacted due to the pandemic in the past two years.

Personal Support Worker Program

Exciting news for anyone interested in becoming a Personal Support Worker. The Upper Grand's 2022 PSW Program is being offered tuition-free. In addition to free tuition, those enrolled can also receive paid work placements. The PSW Program is run through the Upper Grand DSB's Continuing Education department and the program is led by instructors holding Ontario teaching and professional nursing qualifications. Students can also earn credits toward their Ontario Secondary School Diploma while completing the PSW Program. There is more information about the PSW program on the board's website.

Westside SS Student to Attend National Summit

A grade 9 student from Westside SS is one of 60 participants from across Canada to attend a youth summit on allyship and advocacy. Aislinn from Westside SS will join youth from across the country for the Experiences Canada summit in Winnipeg this May, and is one of only a handful chosen to attend from Ontario and as a Grade 9 student, is amongst the youngest who will be attending.

Skills Ontario

In early May, secondary students participated in the 2022 Skills Ontario Competition, which took place virtually this year. The Skills Ontario Competition offers a unique opportunity for students to demonstrate their skills over two and a half days. This year, 39 competitors from the Upper Grand DSB from 7 different secondary schools participated. Nine competitors placed, including gold-medal winners in four categories. Thanks to the 15 educators/mentors who supported the students every step of the way. You can see all the results on the board website.

Wellington Heights SS

Students at Wellington Heights SS have won the Ducks Unlimited Canada's National Wetland Centres of Excellence case study competition — earning them \$500 for their school and the title of Youth Wetland Experts. The annual case study competition challenges students to tackle and break down barriers regarding real conservation problems faced in the field. Students Zoë, Yuvika, and Sydney chose to examine salt marshes and sea-level rise in Atlantic Canada. You can read more about the students' case study and experiences on the board website.

5. Confirmation of the Agenda

RESOLUTION #22-135: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved, seconded by Trustee MacNeil, that the agenda be confirmed as printed.

The motion carried.

6. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

7. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting Held April 26, 2022

RESOLUTION #22-136: Trustee Campbell moved, seconded by Trustee Lustgarten Evoy, that the minutes of the meeting held April 26, 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 #22-137: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved, seconded by Trustee MacNeil, 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 #22-138: Trustee Topping moved, seconded by Trustee Campbell, that the Board rise and sit in Committee of the Whole with the Chairperson presiding.

The motion carried.

10. Delegations Regarding Proposed Changes to School Volunteer Policy 205

Delegation #1, Jen Tulloch

Jen Tulloch shared with the Board that volunteers are hard to come by and she strongly disagrees with making a VSC mandatory for all activities. She supports vulnerable sector checks for long term, supervisory or close proximity roles such as reading support, field trip supervision where groups are independent from the main, and lunch supervision. But does not think it is reasonable to expect a parent to pursue a VSC in order to be allowed to weed the school's gardens or man a bake sale table for 30 minutes at a school open house. Ms. Tulloch noted a VSC should be required for activities determined to be high or even medium risk and not for low risk activities. Ms. Tulloch shared volunteers have helped with family wellness nights, family game nights, snack programs, pizza lunches, and book fairs to name a few. These volunteers come in and work with the kids, not one on one, not unsupervised, and added that these will be the events that will end if Upper Grand does not have volunteers in the schools. Ms. Tulloch shared that involved families make for stronger schools and communities, as well as increasing student success rates in the school when they see the parents

engaged and active in the school. She expressed through the pandemic with volunteers not in the schools, the principals, teachers, and administration are struggling with COVID-19 and the changes in protocols and procedures. Lastly, Ms. Tulloch believes this goes directly against the board's principles regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion and shared the VSC is actively getting in the way of parents getting involved and making Upper Grand schools the best place that they can be.

Delegation #2, Jen MacLeod

Jen MacLeod is a parent of two kids in the Upper Grand DSB and is in her second year as an elementary remote teacher at Upper Grand. She shared one of the things she misses most is having volunteers in her classroom. Last year Ms. MacLeod managed to have 12 volunteers in her classroom over the year but noted this year the parents aren't able to make it to help out. Ms. MacLeod shared she was drawn back into teaching herself thanks to volunteering in her kids' classrooms. She formed valuable connections with her community and her volunteer experience is among the most treasured of her memories. Ms. MacLeod stated without meeting those people through volunteering, she believes as a parent, her mental health would have been in a different place and that there is a lot of research to show the benefits to students observing their parents involved in school and being exposed to other adults who are passionate about their education or careers and who can serve as inspiration and a positive role model. Ms. MacLeod made it clear she absolutely thinks that the vulnerable sector check is necessary where there is close contact or if someone is unsupervised. From her perspective as a teacher, the idea that all school volunteers need a VSC for any volunteer activity can be quite restrictive. She expressed many colleagues and other teachers will not bother getting volunteers in their classrooms because there are already too many hoops to jump through. There are so many volunteer positions that do not involve students and those are some of the ways that help the schools to run smoothly. Examples provided were: decorating the gym for a school-wide event; planning for and setting up for parent engagement evenings, family fun nights, assemblies, and graduations; maintaining school gardens; preparing handouts to go home; and counting/preparing deposit forms for funds raised through dance-a-thons or other school run activities. Ms. MacLeod stated the Board needs careful consideration on what is deemed to be high risk and thinks what Upper Grand DSB has at the moment works really well. Principals have discretion to assess the risk and look at the different factors of the particular activity that is being considered. Ms. MacLeod expressed concern on two items and shared that volunteers should never be hugging or lifting children in a school setting, and consistent, intimate physical contact such as changing, bathing, toileting should never be something that a volunteer should be doing. There were some concerns mentioned regarding new immigrant families to Upper Grand DSB and the logistics of those families being able to travel and obtain a VSC and being able to provide two pieces of government issued ID's.

Trustees asked questions of clarification and thanks were expressed.

11. Response to Delegations

Trustee Busuttill gave thanks to both Ms. Tulloch and Ms. MacLeod and informed the delegates a full discussion will take place under item # 15 - Policy Management Committee later on the agenda.

12. Program Committee

RESOLUTION #22-139: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the minutes of the Program Committee held May 3, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

RESOLUTION #22-140: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that:

1. The verbal update from Student Trustees be received, with thanks.
2. The verbal update on Mental Health be received, with thanks.
3. The verbal report for Student Achievement Data Update be received.
4. The verbal report for FSL 3 Year Plan be received.
5. The verbal report for De-streaming be received.
6. The verbal OPSBA report be received.

The motion carried.

13. Business Operations Committee

RESOLUTION #22-141: Trustee MacNeil moved that the minutes of the Business Operations Committee held May 10, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

RESOLUTION #22-142: Trustee MacNeil moved that:

1. Memo PLN: 22-13 “2022 Long Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) Annual Review Report” dated May 10, 2022 be received.
2. The Communication Plan as described in memo PLN: 22-13 “2022 Long Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) Annual Review Report” be approved.
3. The minutes of the Trustee Climate Emergency Committee (TCEC) held April 19, 2022 be received and considered.

4. The verbal 2022/23 Budget Update be received.
5. The verbal OPSBA Update be received.

The motion carried.

14. Special Education Advisory Committee

RESOLUTION #22-143: Trustee Edwards moved that the minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held May 11, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

15. Policy Management Committee

RESOLUTION #22-144: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the minutes of the Policy Management Committee held May 3, 2022 be received and considered.

The motion carried.

Trustee Campbell requested that item # 2 be considered separately.

The motions were placed, with the exemption of # 2.

RESOLUTION #22-145: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that:

1. The School Volunteers Report be received.
3. Policy 100 – Policy Management be approved.

The motion carried.

Item # 2 was placed after the others carried.

2. Policy 205 – School Volunteers be approved.

Trustee Campbell thanked the delegates for their passion and beliefs regarding the proposed change in screening volunteers and indicated she will be supporting the proposed change to the volunteer policy for many reasons. As a retired nurse who worked many years in hospital emergency rooms, she has seen the tragic results of what can happen to a child entrusted for just a few moments to a formerly trusted volunteer or friend. Trustee Campbell expressed that the Upper Grand DSB needs to ensure that anyone who encounters students entrusted to the Board's care have been cleared by the police. If this service is not offered on a complimentary basis by the police services in the area,

she believes it should be a Board responsibility to pay for the police checks and noted there is no better way to spend money, than on the safety of the students.

Trustee Foley asked if all contractors accessing Upper Grand DSB properties are also providing a background check. Executive Superintendent of Business Operations and Support Services Regier confirmed the standard clause for contracts would require a vulnerable sector check.

Trustee Foley believed this policy as it currently stands should not pass this evening, and to re-evaluate certain significant concerns with this policy. He agreed with Trustee Campbell that the child safety should be paramount and be priority number one.

Trustee MacNeil agreed that a vulnerable sector check is a very important tool and that is absolutely necessary in situations where the volunteers are working one on one with a student, or going on camping trips overnight, or school field trips where the person is in charge of a group of students. Where she does not see the value of the vulnerable sector check would be small jobs such as standing in the office and sorting out pizza slices to be delivered to classrooms. Asking the parent to undertake the vulnerable sector check to do a 10-minute job is unreasonable and as mentioned tonight by the delegates not everyone has access to get a VSC. Ms. MacNeil also mentioned the VSC may take up to 100-120 days business days depending on whether the individual needed to provide fingerprints, and that itself could be a difficult experience to go through. Trustee MacNeil shared she would not be supporting this edition and believes this is an unreasonable step to take as a Board.

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy informed she works closely with survivors and victims of trafficking and sexual assault, and shared that it is happening in every school, city, and community across this country. She expressed how easily children can be groomed, to win trust and then exploit it. Not through direct contact such touching or working closely with them, but by finding vulnerabilities in other ways. Trustee Lustgarten Evoy believed the focus and discussion should be on how to remove obstacles and supply the supports to help those people who are facing barriers to getting a VSC, and not how to remove the volunteers.

Trustee Edwards shared due to the pandemic the students have been missing many opportunities over the past few years, and that volunteer/parent involvement is a very important key to help in this area. The new policy that was crafted by staff had already been amended with enhanced screening measures and she believes adding a VSC will reduce the volunteers that are so badly needed to run activities and field trips. Trustee Edwards also suggested more clarity is needed on who the VSC would be needed for in order to volunteer.

Director of Sovran clarified Section 2.5 in the amended policy 205 is required for all school volunteers working with students under 18 years of age.

Trustee Edwards asked if the volunteer would not work with children, for example weeding gardens or working in the office, they would not be working with students under the age of 18. She suggested the Board needs to distinguish exactly what it is that will be voted on, is it working with, or not in the presence of working with, because all activities being discussed are not working with children, but are on school property.

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy clarified the vote will be whether the Board will ask for a VSC for anyone in the schools working with students under the age of 18. This means in the school buildings, on the school property, bussing, and anything where they will be with the children.

Director Sovran read the amended Policy 205 Section 2.5 was amended and it reads: Volunteers perform tasks under the supervision and guidance of teachers or supervisors in conjunction with principals. Volunteers must adhere to this policy and procedures manual, and the information provided to them on their roles and responsibilities, which includes providing a signed Volunteer Agreement. A vulnerable sector check from the local police service, or offence declaration, is required for all school volunteers working with students under 18 years of age.

Trustee Ross' perspective is that making a volunteer wait 120 days for their VSC is significantly less damaging than injuring a student. As a paramedic who transported patients, many years after they have been assaulted in any way, they are messed up for decades and not for a few days. She does not believe it is a good idea to lower a standard of responsibility for volunteers instead of raising it. Volunteering places people within grasp and the Board needs to do everything possible to make sure that anyone who has access to students has been checked thoroughly, and stated it may not be perfect but is currently the best action the Board can do. Trustee Ross also indicated that the Board can do several things to make this an easier and better process, and noted that is what needs to be looked at, instead of making it easier for people to be on the grounds or around students.

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy stated it is the Board's job as trustees, as educators, as adults, as community members, as family members to do our due diligence to keep the students safe and protect them as best we can. She shared that she would support the motion.

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy requested a recorded vote.

Trustee Busuttil clarified the motion on the floor is to approve Policy 205 School Volunteers as written.

Yeah: Trustees Lustgarten Evoy, Campbell, Ross, Busuttil

Nay: Trustees Edwards, Topping, MacNeil, Foley

Abstain: Trustee Bailey

The motion was lost.

Trustee Foley would like this to go back to PMC to look at the two-page policy document in particular the top portion of page 2 that says, “working with students under the age of 18”. He stated it caused some confusion amongst trustees and needs to be reviewed.

Trustee Busuttil clarified the trustee role is the policy and it is the staff role to operationalize the policy into what it would look like in the schools.

RESOLUTION #22-146: Trustee Foley moved to send Policy 205 - School Volunteers back to the Policy Management Committee for further consideration.

The motion passed.

16. Audit Committee

RESOLUTION #22-147: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the minutes of the Audit Committee dated May 10, 2022 be received.

The motion carried.

17. First Nation, Métis, Inuit Education Council (FNMIEC)

RESOLUTION #22-148: Trustee Campbell moved that the minutes of the First Nation, Métis, Inuit Education Council meeting held May 2, 2022 be received.

The motion carried.

18. Monthly COVID-19 Update

Executive Superintendent McDonald and Superintendent Donaldson provided updates on Upper Grand DSB’s continued response to the impact of COVID-19 in Upper Grand schools. Since the last board meeting in April, absenteeism, and the prevalence of COVID-19 in the schools mirrored what was happening across the community. The peak in early April has continued to decline and mirrors the more regular absenteeism seen in the past.

A summary of measures which continue to be employed in schools were provided and highlights were shared of new resources to encourage staff and students to wear masks as recommended by Public Health, both locally and provincially.

An overview of 3 key areas were provided:

1. COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidance

- Protective Measures Campaign
 - New Public Facing Webpage – COVID-19 Layers of Protection: Please Wear a Mask
 - Reminders of all COVID-19 Layers of Protection
 - Request to wear masks indoors
 - Q&A on Masking in Schools
 - Additional Posters for schools – Public Health provided educational material to support value of masking in schools
 - All protective measures continuing
- Screening and Verification continuing

2. Absenteeism Reporting and Updates

- COVID-19 Self-Reporting Data
 - Schools are continuing to provide a regular report of positive COVID-19 cases that were self-reported to the school
 - Website Sample - The self-reported cases will show on their school website the date it was updated, and the number of cases that were self-reported to the school on that date
- Absenteeism Reporting and Updates
 - Daily absent tracking pilot continues
 - Allows to monitor trends in absenteeism rates and gives a better sense of the impact of COVID-19 on schools
 - Generally absences are continuing to trend down or remain stable

3. Elementary and Secondary Updates

- Mental Health Supports
 - Mental Health Week activities were in place to support continued learning and building of important wellness schools for students

- Webinar on Digital Wellness offered this month through the HOPE series in partnership with CMHA, Community Resilience Coalition, WCDSB and parents for children with mental health
- Dr. Jean Clinton presentation to elementary educators and support staff along with book study of Love Builds Brains
- Working directly with the Grove Hubs across Guelph/Wellington to make connections to schools and staff as well as to build bridges for high needs students for summer
- Planning stages of offering Living Life to the Full in person in the summer for ages 12+
- Curating resources, programs and supports available to students and families throughout the summer

RESOLUTION #22-149: Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the verbal monthly COVID-19 update be received with thanks.

The motion carried.

19. Multi-Year Plan Update

Director of Education Sovran provided an update on the Multi-Year Plan. Timelines to date have been met, and stages that have been undertaken and completed were shared. The Multi-Year Engagement survey was launched last week to all Upper Grand schools and through the board website, and a second launch was issued today with school messenger messages out to all families as well as on social media. The survey is meant to capture feedback from students, staff, parents, caregivers, community members, and partners in the community around the strategic priorities and the various priorities that are being explored to develop the MYP. The survey report will be brought to the Business Operations meeting in June and a session with the trustees will occur to review and revise once all of the feedback has been received and analyzed. This report will then be brought to the final Board meeting in June for approval. Director Sovran informed everyone the survey is live and will continue to stay active until noon on June 6th. The survey can be accessed through Upper Grand DSB website and he strongly encouraged as many members of the Upper Grand DSB communities in schools, families, and all community groups to participate to inform this very important process.

RESOLUTION #22-150: Trustee Topping moved that the verbal Multi-Year Plan Update be received with thanks.

The motion carried.

20. Staff Retirements and Resignations

Executive Officer of Human Resources Pyke presented the Staff Retirements and Resignations report dated May 24, 2022.

RESOLUTION #22-151: Trustee Edwards moved that the Staff Retirements and Resignations report Appendix A and Appendix B dated May 24, 2022 be received.

The motion carried.

21. Board Correspondence

RESOLUTION #22-152: Trustee Foley moved that the Board Correspondence dated May 24, 2022, be received.

The motion carried.

22. Trustee Questions and Reports – Nil report

23. OPSBA Report

Trustee MacNeil provided the following OPSBA update:

Policy Resolutions

The 2022 Annual General Meeting Agenda, Handbook and Election Guide will be distributed this week. To help prepare for OPSBA's 34th Annual General Meeting (AGM) being held on Friday, June 10, 2022, at the Westin in Ottawa, six member Board policy resolutions were reviewed at the April 29th/30th Board of Directors meeting and Trustee MacNeil provided the information to the trustees in an attachment. In addition, the policy resolution which will be presented by the Upper Grand District School Board from the floor at the AGM was also attached.

OPSBA delegates will vote at the AGM on the policy resolutions based on direction provided to them by the trustees of their board. Trustee MacNeil asked the trustees to review the policy resolutions ahead of the May Board meeting, to provide any feedback.

Elections

Nominations for elected positions at OPSBA closed at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10. A list of nominations received is available at: AGM ElectionNominationsChart.pdf (opsba.org).

Congratulations go to the following people who have been acclaimed:

Cathy Abraham has been acclaimed to the position of President for 2022-2024, and the following individuals have been acclaimed to the position of Regional Council Chair for 2022-2023:

- Central West: Donna Danielli, Halton District School Board
- East: Susan Humphries, Renfrew County District School Board
- North: George Saarinen, Lakehead District School Board
- West: Arlene Morell, Thames Valley District School Board

Table officer positions that will be voted on at the AGM are: First Vice President and Second Vice President. Trustee MacNeil provided links to the candidates' descriptions in the AGM ElectionNominationsChart.pdf (opsba.org) and asked trustees to speak to her about who they think the Board should support.

In Central West, positions that are still open and available to be contested at the regional meeting are: Regional Vice Chair, Policy Development Work Group member, Policy Development Work Group alternate member, Education Program Work Group member, Education Program Work Group alternate member. If any Upper Grand DSB trustees are interested in any of these positions (with the exception of Regional Vice Chair as that position must be filled by someone who is a member of the OPSBA Board of Directors), please speak to Trustee MacNeil for assistance in submitting a nomination.

Important Dates

Central West Regional Meeting - June 11th at AGM

AGM June 9th-11th Ottawa/Virtual - Deadline to register is June 3rd.

RESOLUTION #22-153: Trustee Edwards moved that the verbal OPSBA report dated May 24, 2022 be received.

The motion carried.

24. Dates of Future Meetings

RESOLUTION #22-154: Trustee Topping moved that the June 2022 schedule for Board and Standing Committee Meetings be approved as follows:

Program Committee	June 7, 2022
Business Operations	June 14, 2022
Board Meeting	June 28, 2022

The motion carried.

Trustee Edwards advised due to student exams the TCEC meeting has moved to Wednesday, June 15th at 7:00 p.m.

RESOLUTION #22-155: Trustee Edwards moved that the Dates of Future Meetings dated May 24, 2022 be received with the above noted revision.

The motion carried.

25. Motion to Rise and Report to the Board

RESOLUTION #22-156: Trustee Edwards moved that the Committee of the Whole rise and report to the Board.

The motion carried.

26. Ratification of Business

RESOLUTION #22-157: Trustee Foley moved, seconded by Trustee Lustgarten Evoy that the business transacted by the Committee of the Whole be now ratified by the Board.

The motion carried.

27. Adjournment

RESOLUTION #22-158: Trustee MacNeil moved, seconded by Trustee Edwards that the Board adjourn and this meeting now close at 8:47 p.m.

The motion carried.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.