



SAFE, EQUITABLE & INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

1:00-2:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Aimee Copping, Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition
 Alethia Stephenson, Dufferin County Canadian Black Association
 Ben Hesch, Family Counselling & Support Services, Guelph
 Cheryl Van Ooteghem, Superintendent of Education, UGDSB
 Dayami Ramirez, Immigrant Services, Guelph & Wellington County
 Heather Loney, Communications & Community Engagement Officer, UGDSB
 Indu Arora, West Village Community Development Cooperative
 Jessica Rowden, Curriculum Lead, Equity & Inclusion, UGDSB
 Joy Sammy, Workplace Equity & Diversity Manager, UGDSB
 Laurie Whyte, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
 Marguerite Campbell, Guelph Black Heritage Society
 Martha MacNeil, Trustee & Chair of the UGDSB
 Niketa Peters, Dufferin Child & Family Services

REGRETS:

Colinda Clyne, Curriculum Lead, First Nations, Metis & Inuit, UGDSB
 Jass Ghuman, The Guelph Multicultural Festival (*unable to access the meeting*)
 Jenny Marino, Mental Health & Additions Lead, UGDSB
 Jennifer Parkinson, Grand River Metis Council
 Jolly Bedi, Trustee, UGDSB
 Lynette Pole-Langdon, Family Transition Place, Orangeville
 Mahrukh Syed, Muslim Society of Guelph
 Maureen Oesch, Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)
 Mona Kambo, Grange Hill East Neighbourhood Group

ITEM	DISCUSSION	FOLLOW-UP
Chair – Marguerite Campbell Welcome and Land Acknowledgement	Welcome to Dayami Ramirez who is replacing Sandra Cocco from Immigrant Services	
Review June 9 Agenda	Approved – Laurie Whyte	
Review April 21 Minutes	Approved – Martha MacNeil Correction required to Mahrukh Syed’s name on page 2	June (correction done)

Meet new Director	<p>Trustee Martha MacNeil introduced the new Director Designate, Peter Sovran. She thanked the group for input for the Director candidate profile noting the desire for an active connection with equity and inclusion.</p> <p>Peter was thankful for the warm welcome and appreciated the time today. He is looking forward to working with the group.</p>	
Muslim Society follow-up Jessica Rowden	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In consultation with the Purchasing Dept. the RFP process for food vendors will now include the requirement to provide halal options (cafeterias and vending machines). This learning will also be incorporated into the in-house food schools provide. Expectation is to include dietary restrictions. 2. Returning to designated prayer rooms is a priority (since COVID, some rooms have been needed for Health & Safety areas). Posters (welcome sign as well as sign for the prayer room door) are being reviewed and updated. 3. The Ministry has provided funding for a Cricket program with the goal of building cultural competence and sports skills. Similar to Wheelchair Basketball and Sledge Hockey, “kits” will include all the equipment and travel from school to school. A robust training program will be included and would involve local Cricket clubs and Cricket experts. There are currently 3 secondary schools that offer an intramural Cricket program – the goal is to expand to elementary. 4. We will work to ensure all events of significance are given the priority they are due. We are thankful for assistance from Joy Sammy and team. <p>A moment was taken to express our condolences to the family in London, their family, friends and the entire Muslim community. “Hate” cannot and will not be tolerated in the Upper Grand DSB. We will stand together to eliminate Islamophobia.</p> <p>We will be working with Aasiyah Khan, Manager of Education Programs with the NCCM – National Council of Canadian Muslims on programming to dismantle racism and hate. Martha MacNeil asked</p>	

	that trustees be added to the list of folks that will be doing this learning.	
Community Partners Review Family Counselling & Support Services Ben Hesch Initiatives for LGBTQ+	Ben shared his organization’s new name “ <i>Compass Community Services</i> ” There continues to be growing support needed for our LGBTQ+ youth. Discussed the various methods to offer meaningful connections (dedicated number for phone & text) but agreed a multi-faceted way of connecting is needed – “Discord” was suggested. Currently there are phone and text lines but what makes the most sense for our youth? What do they prefer? There seems to be interest in “in-person” as well. Ideas were brought forth as ways of bringing youth together. Could possibly partner with Big Brothers/Big Sisters at some point. Jessica indicated a need in the rural community. GLOW LGBTQ+ Youth Group – Dufferin was mentioned. There is also a crossover with students with disabilities as there is difficulty finding supports. There are different layers of equity.	
Review Immigrant Services	Dayami introduced herself as the Settlement Manager for Immigrant Services and reviewed the presentation from the last meeting. They have a good partnership with both school boards and also work with Compass. The following services were reviewed: Translation & Interpretation, Language Assessment & Referral, Settlement Workers in Schools, Settlement Orientation & Referral, Community Connections, Employment Services, Mobilized, Engaged, Involved & work with Volunteers. Q: Is there information (i.e. flyers) available at school offices when families arrive? A: Our services are available to any school but we do have physical space in 25 schools where we go in and provide services (based on demographics). Q: Would like insights into remote services during COVID. Is that something that may continue? i.e. in remote areas? A: Yes, we are looking at how we can accommodate everyone in all areas. Staff have been able to visit families throughout Wellington. A presentation is planned for August. The hope is to return to in person services. If anyone is in need of technology, the Get Connected program can be accessed.	

Community Partner Sharing – The Guelph Multicultural Festival – Jass Ghuman	Jass could not access the meeting and his presentation would not open.	
Grange Hill East Neighbourhood Group – Mona Kambo	Unavailable for this meeting	
West Village Community Development Cooperative – Indu Arora	<p>Indu provided an overview of the services: WWV SEISSC Presentation</p> <p>They have been around for 20 years; self-funded and received charitable status this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer backpacks, school supplies and whatever is needed for the transition back to school - Minimal cost for camps; recreation programs currently on hold because of COVID - Work with various sources to provide free eye glasses; - West End area lacks accessible adult education opportunities - Partner with Children’s Foundation to help with food insecurities - Provides Goodwill Dollars for families to shop directly for what they need - Language and cultural barriers are large in this area. Parents are not understanding what is happening with their children’s education. <p>ACTION ITEMS –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would like to see translator going to parent/ teacher meetings; review report cards and addressing special needs. Dayami confirmed that SWIS workers do assist families in this way. Translation services have increased – the Government has provided more funding to ensure families get the support. 2. Short term/crisis counselling with language support – SWIS offers this as well in different languages. <p>Q: Is there somewhere (i.e. report card, interview schedule) to indicate that a translator would be helpful? A: This should be communicated with the school administration/office staff.</p>	

Laurie Whyte	Laurie shared the following video made by local youth about what life is like living with FASD. People with FASD talk about FASD	
Next meeting	September 22, 2021, 1:00 This meeting will be to plan for the balance of the year and think about our next steps as a committee. (This year was spent on the community; who everyone is; making direct connectons and considering how we will all work together) Jessica will provide information about all the work that is being done with safe schools/equity.	
	Motion to Adjourn – Laurie Whyte	