

PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee of the Peel District School Board, held in the Brampton Room, the H. J. A. Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga, Ontario on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 18:00 hours.

Members present:

Kathy McDonald, Chair
Stan Cameron
Robert Crocker (18:20)
Suzanne Nurse
Harkirat Singh
Rick Williams

Trustee also present:

Sue Lawton

Administration:

Poleen Grewal, Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services
(Executive Member)
Joy Uniac, Superintendent of Education, Early Years (Executive Backup Member)
Jeff deFreitas, Coordinating Superintendent

Nicole Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. **Approval of Agenda**

IP-10, moved by Stan Cameron, that the agenda be approved.

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2. **Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, January 18, 2017**

IP-11, moved by Suzanne Nurse, that the Minutes of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, held January 18, 2017, be approved.

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4. Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – March 2017

IP-12, moved by Sue Lawton, that the reports re Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – March 2017, be received.

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5. Structures to Support Equity and Inclusion in Peel DSB

Poleen Grewal, Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Support Services, reviewed the two charts attached to the report, noting that the organization chart outlines staff responsible for equity and inclusion at the Board. She explained that the second chart highlights various committee structures set up to achieve equity and inclusion, including at the Leadership team level, school and department levels, and specific committees such as the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Journey Ahead Steering Committee, First Nations, Metis and Inuit Advisory, etc.

A trustee remarked that, from the organization chart, it appears that the work of equity and inclusion is dispersed among different departments. She stated that she had asked during two previous Budget development processes, about building a business case for a separate superintendency to handle equity and inclusion. She indicated her intention to pursue this request during this year's Budget development process. Confirming that there has been growth in this area, Superintendent Grewal noted that the creation of new roles in the recent past will help to align the work and build cohesion. Coordinating Superintendent, Jeff deFreitas, explained that equity and inclusion is integral to every decision and every department, which is one of the reasons that the work appears to be dispersed. Other trustees expressed support for a separate superintendency for equity and inclusion. Commending the work of Equity staff, they suggested, however, the need for more cross connections in the organizational structure, and commented that a central repository for this work will create more cohesion and accountability. It was reported that faith leaders had indicated that some other school boards have a separate superintendency for equity and inclusion. In response to a question about submitting a business case early in the Budget development process, Coordinating Superintendent deFreitas reported that the deadline for departments to submit business cases is March 10, 2017. Superintendent Grewal confirmed that she will bring the trustees' request to the attention of the Director's Office and the Leadership team.

IP-13, moved by Harkirat Singh, that the report re Structures to Support Equity and Inclusion in Peel DSB, be received.

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6. The Future We Want Refresh

Superintendent Grewal stated that The Future We Want initiative was started in 2000 to transform curriculum with the goal of achieving the Board’s vision for equity and inclusion. There have been revisions and updates to the initiative since 2015-2016, and she noted that The Future We Want Refresh is a continuation of the work on equity, and provides an online platform of sample reflective lessons which can be easily accessed by teachers, administrators, students, and families.

Harjit Aujla, Coordinating Principal, First Nations, Metis, Inuit and Equity, Beverly McArthur, Instructional Coordinator, Social Studies, and Hiren Mistry, Instructional Coordinator, Equity and Inclusive Education, reviewed information from a PowerPoint presentation on The Future We Want Refresh. The need for system wide implementation and stronger connections between equity, and instruction and assessment practices, and to modern learning were highlighted as the rationale for the refresh, which will cover instruction and assessment, religious accommodation and policy and guidelines. Student voice, critical literacy, inquiry, culturally responsive pedagogy, and assessment are embedded through a responsive teaching planning process. The intended impact of sample lessons on the system and staff, empowerment of students and the opportunity to demonstrate student learning to parents were explained. Key structures reflected in the learning lessons were highlighted in some Grade 3 sample reflective lessons, including lived experiences of the student, and the shift from teacher taught to student taught.

Trustees’ questions of clarification were responded to by the administration, including: accountability can be demonstrated through transparency, building on student voice and lived experiences; discussions are being initiated on how the community and school relations component will be updated; whether the lessons are voluntary or are they monitored to ensure that all teachers are made aware of them; roll out plan will be communicated to the system; professional learning available for teachers; whether diverse cultural history will be included as a grade course;.

IP-14, moved by Sue Lawton, that the report re The Future We Want Refresh, be received.

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7. First Nations, Metis and Inuit Strategic Action Plan

Acknowledging the work and guidance of Instructional Coordinator of FNMI Education, Melissa Wilson, Harjit Aujla reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) Strategic Action Plan. He noted that, over the past three years, the Board’s Action Plan for FNMI education provided professional development, set up learning circles, invited indigenous educators and Elders to schools, and organized indigenous educational activities. However, long term effects of this work were difficult to evaluate because participants varied.

(Continued overleaf)

7. First Nations, Metis and Inuit Strategic Action Plan (Continued)

Harjit Aujla reported that the revised Strategic Action Plan is based on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action #62 and #63, which includes making available age-appropriate curriculum and learning resources on residential schools, treaties and Aboriginal people's historical and contemporary contributions to Canada, and to address teacher training needs, with the goal of creating more intercultural understanding and mutual respect. With regard to implementing the Strategic Action Plan, Harjit Aujla, listed the fifteen schools which received a package of professional development activities to learn about FNMI histories, perspectives and contemporary issues. A cross section of Kindergarten-Grade 5, middle schools and secondary schools were chosen, and Alternative Programs department is participating. Progress will be tracked, and one lead teacher and one lead administrator from each school are invited to be a part of the Learning Circle, and will commit to learn and critically reflect on the FNMI education and share successes and challenges. Harjit Aujla noted that surveys are taken after each professional development session, and bi-monthly meetings are held. He then read to the Committee the communal commitment made by principals who are involved in the Strategic Action Plan. On a request from trustees, an electronic copy of the communal commitment will be shared with them.

Superintendent Grewal advised that Peel should be proud of the relationship between the Board and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, which was initiated by Ian Pettigrew. She reported that, when the Leadership Team visited them, Elders asked to collaborate with Peel in the areas of mathematics, special education and outdoor education. She acknowledged Trustee Robert Crocker and Superintendent of Education, Joy Uniac, for their participation on the FNMI Advisory Circle. A trustee commented that there are a number of curriculum areas to integrate FNMI education, and suggested more classroom supports to encourage teachers to integrate FNMI histories and perspectives in their lessons. Superintendent Grewal highlighted the importance of uncovering the curriculum through student inquiry, and confirmed that writing teams will be creating resources. Further questions and comments from trustees included: need to teach authentic issues facing FNMI people; strategy to increase the number of self-identified students; sharing the context of FNMI education with parents; fifteen additional schools will be added to the project; schools chosen through an application process that considered the number of self-identified students at the school, and culturally responsive pedagogy already being taught at the school.

IP-15, moved by Robert Crocker, that the report re First Nations, Metis and Inuit Strategic Action Plan, be received.

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8. Make Peel Proud Resource Rainbow

Coordinating Principal, School Effectiveness, David Jack, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation providing information on the resource package that will help guide educators in supporting all students, especially those who identify as members or allies of the LGBTQ community. He acknowledged the work of the writing team in developing close to 100 resource templates for the package.

8. Make Peel Proud Resource Rainbow (Continued)

Providing background information, David Jack indicated that resources were updated as educators lacked the framework to make the work of promoting inclusive thought and behaviour, more meaningful to students. He stated that conversations about LGBTQ realities are challenging, and the package includes a section on anticipated student responses and suggested responses with a consistently clear message of inclusivity. Reporting that the resources are organized with two key audiences in mind, educators and students, David Jack noted that the educators' resources set the context for including LGBTQ realities and provides conversation starters and responses to provoke further learning. For students, the package includes books, videos, posters, events, websites and other resources, identified by appropriate grade level. David Jack stated that these resources will be catalogued on the revised LGBTQ webpage. Decals, which were provided to everyone at the meeting, will form part of the package and make it clear that Peel schools are safe places. David Jack concluded his presentation with a video clip prepared by junior students at Thornwood Public School.

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IP-16, moved by Rick Williams, that the meeting extend beyond 20:30 hours to complete the agenda.

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The administration responded to trustees' questions of clarification regarding professional learning for teachers which will help to promote inclusive thought and behaviour, and classification of resources to ensure age-appropriate material is shared with students.

IP-17, moved by Stan Cameron, that the report re Make Peel Proud Resource Rainbow, be received.

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9. We Rise Together

IP-18, moved by Rick Williams, that the report re We Rise Together, be received.

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Providing a status update report, Superintendent Grewal noted that the We Rise Together Action Plan is an important component of the equity and inclusion measures being undertaken by the Board. She reported that two community consultations were held, on December 10, 2016 at the Central Board Office, and on January 21, 2017 at Turner Fenton Secondary School. Acting on feedback from the December consultation, members of the black community were appointed facilitators for the January consultation. Information from the two sessions has been provided to Research and Accountability staff for collation. It is expected that facilitators from the January community consultation meeting will meet on February 24, 2017 for small group discussions on the Action Plan facilitated by Phiona Lloyd-Henry and Harjit Aujla. Poleen Grewal reported that the draft Action Plan will be presented to Director's Office for review and is expected be brought to the March 29, 2017 Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee meeting.

9. We Rise Together (Continued)

Superintendent Grewal reported that she, Harjit Aujla, and Associate Director of Instructional Support Services, Scott Moreash, attended a meeting of the Peel Association of African Canadian Educators (PAACE), to obtain feedback on the Action Plan. She commended the group for its genuine reflection on its role in supporting the Board, noting that the input was impressive. She indicated that Phiona Lloyd-Henry, Equity Resource Teacher, and Harjit Aujla, will be meeting with groups of secondary school students to gather their input. Superintendent Grewal provided information on curriculum resources, including development of monographs, and updating the anti bias awareness training and curriculum for student mentorship. Writing team will begin the work on the resources during the March break. With regard to community engagement, there were requests that community input should be ongoing. She advised that careful thought will be given to including prominent groups from the black community. Trustees speaking expressed appreciation for the administration’s efforts on the We Rise Together Action Plan.

IP-18 carried

10. Question Period

Trustee Nurse reported that the “Sharing Our Journeys for Young Women” event is being held tomorrow, February 16, 2017.

Trustee Cameron reported that World Read Aloud Day will be celebrated at some schools tomorrow. He noted that he will be at James Grieve Public School for the event.

Trustee Crocker indicated that today is celebrated as Flag Day.

Trustee Singh asked about structures in place to ensure consistency between university, college and secondary school instruction. He commented that there appears to be a disconnect between teaching in university and college, which can impede student success, and he suggested a discussion on this issue. Lawrence De Maeyer, Coordinating Principal, Learning Technology Support Services, confirmed that discussions are ongoing, with a Ministry roundtable discussion held last week on 21st Century Teaching and Learning, and a think tank looking into the matter. He spoke about the recognition of the mismatch in teaching, and changes being made to learning spaces at University of Guelph-Humber.

Chair McDonald reported that she was at Jean Augustine Secondary School today, when Jean Augustine was present during assembly. Chair McDonald expressed appreciation for the student interaction and critical thinking, and she highlighted the innovative work being done at the school.

11. Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

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12. Adjournment

IP-19, moved by Stan Cameron, that the meeting adjourn (21:10 hours).

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..... Chair Secretary

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS/CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee, held February 15, 2017, there were no recommendations to the Board.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

1. Reports / Information Received

The Committee received the following reports / information: Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – March 2017; Structures to Support Equity and Inclusion in Peel DSB; The Future We Want Refresh; First Nations, Metis and Inuit Strategic Action Plan; Make Peel Proud Resource Rainbow; We Rise Together.

Prepared by:

Nicole Fernandes
Board Reporter

Submitted by:

Poleen Grewal
Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services