

## 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 21, 2018 at 18:00 hours.

Members present:

Carrie Andrews, Chair  
Robert Crocker  
Sue Lawton  
Kathy McDonald  
Janet McDougald

Trustee also present:

David Green

Members absent: (apologies received)

Harkirat Singh  
Rick Williams

Also present:

Shamim Ali, Peel Elementary Occasional Teachers' Local

Administration:

Adrian Graham, Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services  
(Executive Member)

Anthony Edwards, Superintendent of Education, Alternative Programs

Poleen Grewal, Associate Director of Instructional and Equity Support Services

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

### 1. Approval of Agenda

There was no quorum until 18:25 hours. Chair Andrews thanked everyone for their patience.

IP-08, moved by Robert Crocker, 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, December 13, 2017**

IP-09, moved by Janet McDougald, that the Minutes of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, held December 13, 2017, be approved.

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**4. Celebrating Faith and Culture Charts – February and March 2018**

IP-10, moved by Sue Lawton, that the Celebrating Faith and Culture Charts for February and March 2018, be received.

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**5. Terms of Reference**

Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services, Adrian Graham, advised that as part of the Board's regular review of the Peel DSB By-laws, the Terms of Reference are reviewed by Committees of the Board and changes may be proposed. A trustee inquired as to whether a statement referring to equity, inclusion, and success for all students can be added to the Terms of Reference. The suggestion was taken under advisement, and the Terms of Reference will be brought back to the next Committee meeting for discussion.

IP-11, moved by Janet McDougald, that the Terms of Reference, be brought back to the next Instructional Program/Curriculum Committee meeting.

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**6. Peel District School Board's Role in Supporting Students/Families Living in Poverty: Part 2 – Poverty Indicators**

Associate Director of Instructional and Equity Support Services, Poleen Grewal, recalled that the first part of the report was presented in fall 2017, at the Regular Meeting of the Board, outlining various initiatives to support students and families living in poverty. She stated that Part 2 of the three-part report will be presented today, and Part 3 will require an action plan. She noted the value and importance of the report and invited Paul Favaro, Chief of Research and Evaluation, Research and Accountability, to present the findings.

An infographic on Poverty Indicators was circulated. Using a PowerPoint slide presentation, Paul Favaro stated that the report is aligned with the Poverty Reduction Strategy of Ontario and Region of Peel, and follows as the next step of Peel DSB's role in supporting students and families living in poverty. He advised that the report includes a series of eight indicators to provide a picture of the impact of poverty in Peel DSB and to help track and assess progress made. With the help of a chart, he explained how Canadian Census data is used to capture the multi-dimensional nature of poverty using ten Social Risk Index (SRI) deciles and SRI gradients, which provide a measure of the socio-economic gap between students.

**6. Peel District School Board's Role in Supporting Students/Families Living in Poverty: Part 2 – Poverty Indicators (Continued)**

Paul Favaro reviewed the eight poverty indicators listed in the report. He highlighted the three indicator measures for Students Living in Poverty, and noted the large disparity in average household incomes of Peel DSB students. The slides mapping poverty indicated that poverty exists across the Region of Peel and that areas of poverty are often hidden in areas of affluence. The School Readiness indicator considered Early Development Instrument (EDI) data which measures developmental expectations of physical health and well-being, emotional maturity, social competence, language, and cognitive development. With regard to Students Meeting Academic Standards, progress was measured using EQAO scores. Graphs on EQAO results disaggregated by subject and grade showed that the SRI gradient between decile 1 and 10 was far greater in mathematics than in reading and writing. High School Graduation Rates had a 10% difference showing that equity and outcomes differ between decile 1 and 10, and that students in higher income group fare better. Demographic indicators showed that: students in decile 1 to 5 are less likely to enroll in French Immersion; students from one parent families are three times more likely to live in a low income household; there are fewer gifted students and more students with identified special education exceptionalities with behaviour, language impairment and mild intellectual disability in decile 1 than in decile 10; students with autism, learning disabilities, developmental disability and hearing, speech and visual impairment were not impacted by poverty. With regard to persistent absenteeism, there was a 6.5% difference with highest rate of absenteeism in decile 1.

Summarizing the results in the report, Paul Favaro highlighted that poverty is a major risk factor and that being able to identify, measure and understand poverty is crucial in supporting growth and development of students. Trustees speaking expressed appreciation for the report and spoke about the magnitude of poverty in Peel. Questions of clarification from trustees were responded to regarding: help for students living in poverty to access tutoring in mathematics; reviewing SRI data with respect to Regional Learning Choices Programs and offering these programs in low income areas; possibility of a student survey to collect data on ethnicity and race; whether OCT qualified teachers are trained in dealing with students living in poverty, and professional development for teachers in this regard; whether there is a procedure for schools to address poverty related concerns; ensuring high expectations while delivering curriculum to students of low income families. Regarding Board Chair McDougald's query about average family income in Greater Toronto Area, Paul Favaro indicated that \$41,000 is the Low Income Measure (LIM) and poverty entry point for a family of four. Board Chair McDougald spoke about economic status of a household in relation to the educational level of the adults and the importance of parent involvement to improve student success. She stated that education leads to financial improvement, and suggested that the information in this report be shared with social services, Region of Peel, and the community. There was discussion on the benefits of education on individuals and society as a whole. Further questions and comments from trustees included: that the maps in the report reflect poverty areas by postal code and not by students; that educators and principals can inspire students by making them feel welcome and valued; importance of having a culture of believing in the potential of students; late busing results in absenteeism which affects student learning. Trustees thanked Paul Favaro for the informative report.

IP-12, moved by Sue Lawton, that the report re Peel DSBs Role in Supporting Students/Families Living in Poverty: Part 2 – Poverty Indicators, be received.

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**7. Peel Alternative School Amalgamation - Update**

Superintendent of Education, Alternative Programs, Anthony Edwards, advised that a plan was put in place since September 2017, to amalgamate Peel Alternative School (PAS) West and South. He invited KarenThomas-Blanchette, Vice-Principal of PAS South to present a review of the amalgamation.

Using PowerPoint slides, KarenThomas-Blanchette, provided background information of the plan to enhance the variety of opportunities offered to at-risk and in-risk students from PAS West and South locations into one PAS site, mirroring the model currently in place at PAS North in Brampton. She reviewed the benefits of the amalgamation to students and staff, which included: increased program options and opportunity to provide engaging multi-credit programs; more extra-curricular programs; access to dedicated classroom spaces; increased collaboration among staff; enriched extra-curricular and experiential learning opportunities for students; reduced fragmentation of teaching assignments over numerous programs; access to staff facilities which helps collaboration.

Karen Thomas-Blanchette reviewed a chart on student enrolment at PAS sites for December 2016 and 2017, and commented that the enrolment is expected to grow. She provided information on busing arrangements for students and confirmed that busing is available for students at PAS North. KarenThomas-Blanchette spoke positively about the benefits of the classrooms that have been refreshed. She stated that the amalgamation was carried out in order to address the decline in student enrolment in Mississauga and so far it has been a positive and successful experience. She encouraged everyone to visit the PAS South site.

IP-13, moved by Kathy McDonald, that the update report re Peel Alternative School Amalgamation, be received.

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**8. We Rise Together - Thirteen Schools Pilot**

Using a PowerPoint slide presentation, Hiren Mistry, Instructional Coordinator of Equity and Inclusive Education, spoke about the six-part professional learning series for Equity Lead teachers and the overall goal of We Rise Together (WRT) 13 pilot project in 13 schools, to deepen educator understanding of the roots of anti-black racism and its impact on schooling. Referring to the Plan for Student Success, Melissa Wilson, Instructional Coordinator of Indigenous Education, stated that one of the focus areas for equity and inclusion is to support black male youth. She shared information on experiences of black youth rooted in systemic biases, historical context of black male students reported in the Stephen Lewis 1992 Report, and reports by Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators and F.A.C.E.S. of Peel Collaborative. Reasons for the WRT Action Plan included, to integrate experiences of black Canadians into school curriculum, deliver bias awareness and anti-black racism professional development, engage with the black community, and to inspire black student leadership and engagement.

**8. We Rise Together Thirteen Schools Pilot (Continued)**

Hiren Mistry explained that the 13 WRT schools were chosen through consultation with Peel DSB's Research team, senior leadership team and Carl James, and that the schools represent a range of Social Risk Index neighbourhoods from low to high. Professional learning is conducted for six full days for teachers, principals, and superintendents of education. Selection of teachers to be trained is based on criteria demonstrating personal commitment to anti-black racism and to equity and inclusion. Melissa Wilson reviewed slides explaining the purpose of the training sessions, which comprises: introduction and culturally responsive pedagogy; Canadian history with an Afro-centric lens; race, racism and intersectionality, anti-racism and future planning for collaborative inquiries for 2018-2019; celebrating the learning and collaboration with anti-racism scholars.

Trustees speaking thanked staff for the report, and discussion ensued with regard to implementing WRT work. A trustee indicated that he will have a discussion with Associate Director Grewal in regard to a policy and accountability for carrying out WRT work. Another trustee spoke about lack of black history in Canadian history books in the past, and inquired whether curriculum materials will be available in schools that will address the issues. Superintendent Graham, advised that a writing team is developing resources which will be available for next year. Responses to questions of clarification and comments from trustees included that, training will be conducted in other schools and families of schools, principals are included in the training, and participation is required in all the sessions. A trustee suggested developing a resource for teachers on how to undertake WRT work.

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IP-14, moved by David Green, that the meeting extend beyond 20:30 hours to complete the agenda.

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(2/3rds' majority)

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In response to a trustee's comment, Associate Director Grewal agreed that feedback from the focus group indicates that students want to hear from role models and narratives of black male educators, as well as black student mentorship and leadership opportunities. Board Chair McDougald thanked staff for the report and Communications department for updating the website, which has information on the progress made. She asked trustees to direct people to the website, where updated information is posted. Poleen Grewal will email the website link to trustees.

IP-15, moved by David Green, that the report re We Rise Together - Thirteen Schools Pilot, be received.

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**9. Question Period**

There were no questions.

**10. Public Question Period**

There were no public questions.

**11. Adjournment**

IP-16, moved by Robert Crocker, that the meeting adjourn (20:45 hours).

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