

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, March 20, 2013 at 18:00 hours.

Members present:

Rick Williams, Chair
Beryl Ford
Harinder Malhi (18:10)
Janet McDougald
Suzanne Nurse
Jeff White

Member absent: (apologies received)

Sue Lawton

Administration:

Shawn Moynihan, Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services
(Executive Member)

Nicole Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. Approval of Agenda

Additional information on Item 10.1, An Introduction to the Region of Peel Secondary School Athletic Association, was circulated. Item 10.2, English as a Second Language (ESL) Review Report #2: Contextual and Demographic Profile, was handed out later in the meeting.

IP-10, moved by Jeff White, that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

..... carried
2/3rds' majority

2. Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

3. Minutes of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, February 20, 2013

IP-11, moved by Beryl Ford, that the Minutes of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, held February 20, 2013, be approved.

..... carried

4. Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – March 2013

IP-12, moved by Suzanne Nurse, that the report re Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – March 2013, be received.

..... carried

5. An Introduction to the Region of Peel Secondary School Athletic Association

Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Support Services, Shawn Moynihan, welcomed members of the Region of Peel Secondary School Athletic Association (ROPSSAA) and expressed appreciation for the work of the association to provide positive sporting experiences for Peel students.

Speaking to the report were Paul Freier, ROPSSAA Chairperson, Dave Joly, Eligibility and Transfer Committee Chairperson, Bruce Dyce, ROPSSAA Representative on the Ontario Federation of School Athletics Associations (OFSAA), Laura McGill, Athletic Convener, and Ian Coulson, Athletic Convener. It was noted that ROPSSAA is an affiliate of the OFSAA, having 66 member schools from Peel public, separate and independent schools. Information regarding ROPSSAA Council, participation statistics for 2011-2012 for each of the 32 sports offered over three seasons, and the total number of sports teams for each Peel DSB secondary school was provided. The total number of participants in all sports was 26,012. The work of ROPSSAA's representative for boys and girls on OFSAA in bringing forward challenges, concerns and expenditures was outlined. Details regarding the 2011-2012 transfer and eligibility applications were provided, along with background information on the development of the Transfer and Eligibility Policy. It was indicated that the policy helps to avoid congregation of stronger players at a particular school and, therefore, creates a level playing field among schools. Decisions on the policy at the local level can be appealed to a provincial committee. The Appeal Forms attached to the report were reviewed.

Several questions of clarification from trustees were responded to by the presenters. Laura McGill advised that the higher approval rate for Peel DSB appeals was due to the 'involuntary transfer' of students from Brampton Centennial and Fletcher's Meadow Secondary Schools as a result of opening of David Suzuki Secondary School. She provided clarification regarding the differing circumstances involving students transferring from outside Canada or the United States vis-à-vis out-of-province students and students transferring from the United States. It was noted that the language for such student transfers is similar in the OFSAA Transfer and Eligibility Policy. Information regarding green fees for students participating in golf was provided.

5. An Introduction to the Region of Peel Secondary School Athletic Association
(Continued)

Board Chair McDougald advised that, due to declining enrolment in the south of Peel, in certain schools there are not enough players for some teams. She reported that there have been complaints from parents that their children are therefore being denied an opportunity to play these sports. She stated that, in the past, when there were insufficient players at one school it was acceptable to form a team with players from neighbouring secondary schools. Indicating that this is no longer permitted, Chair McDougald commented that, as a consequence, students are being denied the opportunity to participate. She encouraged OFSAA to review the decision in the context of enrolment and demographic change. Bruce Dyce indicated that the procedure was initially put in place for football, but was voted out because it was not possible to apply it consistently across all sports. Other concerns were timing of practices, and coach's control and disciplining of students from the neighbouring schools. Paul Freier agreed to include this issue when ROPSAA Council reviews its constitution.

IP-13, moved by Janet McDougald, that the report re An Introduction to the Region of Peel Secondary School Athletic Association, be received.

..... carried

6. English as a Second Language Review Report #2: Contextual and Demographic Profile

Report #2: Contextual and Demographic Profile was circulated, and sections from the report were highlighted by Paul Favaro, Chief of Research, Accountability and School Success Planning. He referred to research of Jim Cummins and Kenji Hakuta on the length of time taken to become proficient in English to succeed academically in grade level work. Skills in conversational English are considered as Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and take one to two years to develop. However, English language skills needed to succeed in school, referred to as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), take at least five to seven years to develop. Paul Favaro advised that, despite this length of time, funding for English as a Second Language (ESL) is received for 4 years, at 100% in the first year, 75% in the second year, 50% in the third year, and 25% in the final year.

Paul Favaro explained the methodology of the ESL / ELD program review, which included an online survey sent to 14 school boards in southern Ontario with eight boards responding, and an analysis of documents, records, and student databases. He noted that, in developing the profile of English Language Learner (ELL) / ESL, the demographic and population trends for Canada, Ontario and the Region of Peel, as well as the increase in the non-immigrant, immigrant and visible minority population, were studied. Reporting that 43% of elementary students (excluding Kindergarten) are ELLs in Peel, Paul Favaro reviewed comparative information for Peel and the school boards surveyed with regard to percentage of ELLs in primary, junior, intermediate, French Immersion, and special education, and the top six languages spoken. Changes in ELL profiles over time, and trends and issues in ESL/ELD with reference to funding, staffing, transition, program, professional learning and support, and parent communication, were outlined.

6. English as a Second Language Review Report #2: Contextual and Demographic Profile (Continued)

Reviewing information contained in the report on funding, Paul Favaro advised that funding does not match need in Peel. He explained the two components of the elementary ESL/ELD grant: recent immigrant component; pupils in Canada component. He noted that funding meets 21% of the ELL need in Peel, which indicates that approximately 29,000 ELL students in Peel are not funded. Expressing concern about the significant underfunding, Board Chair McDougald asked whether the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) is aware of this issue, which needs to be highlighted. Chair Williams indicated that he had raised the issue earlier with OPSBA. He confirmed that, as he is now aware of the magnitude of the deficit, he will advise OPSBA again.

Paul Favaro reported that 26% of elementary students in Peel were in ELL Stages 1 and 2, and 43% of all elementary students were in ELL Stages 1 to 4. Over the five years 2006-2007 to 2010-2011, there has been a 7% increase in the number of ELL Stages 1 and 2 students, and a 3% increase for ELL Stages 3 and 4. He noted that higher numbers of ELL students live in communities with a high social risk index. Paul Favaro reviewed the graphs highlighting the percentage of ELLs for the 2010-2011 school year by region of birth, and language spoken at home. He noted that 63% of all ELL students are at Stages 1 and 2, and 37% are at Stages 3 and 4, and he reviewed the progression of Grades 1-5 students through the ESL/ELD stages of English language acquisition.

Zaiba Beg, Instructional Coordinator of ESL/ELD Programs, reported that ESL/ELD students in Stages 3 and 4 are progressing well, but need more improvement on language acquisition. Stages 3-4 correspond to years 5 to 7 of language proficiency and still need accommodation, while Stage 2 students require the most intensive attention. Due to a deficit in funding, schools may prioritize staffing to meet Stages 1 and 2 ELL needs. Paul Favaro indicated that one of the recommendations from the report is to link funding to assessment.

Zaiba Beg then outlined the recommendations arising from the report, including: emphasize the implementation of culturally responsive approaches to curriculum, teaching and assessment; continue to provide additional resources to schools with high ELL population and social risk; advocate for a consistent operational definition of ELLs across the province which would standardize the process of identifying ELL students; continue to work with federal and provincial governments to gain increased funding; support staffing with collaborations to facilitate ELL research; improve ELL monitoring and tracking and include ELL level of language acquisition in the student's Ontario Student Record.

In reply to a trustee's question of clarification, Superintendent Moynihan confirmed that the Ministry has provided broad definitions of the ELL stages, but these are interpreted differently among school boards. He stated that the stages do not have clear criteria, unlike the STEP (Steps to English Proficiency) assessment resource. It was noted that STEP is linked to the Ontario Curriculum, but the ELL stages are not.

(Continued overleaf)

6. English as a Second Language Review Report #2: Contextual and Demographic Profile (Continued)

Information regarding the AQ courses offered by York University, Ontario Institute for Student Education, and the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario was provided. Suggestions were made to hire teachers with the ESL/ELL qualifications, or require them to acquire these within a certain number of years, or provide loans towards financing their studies in ESL. In response to a trustee's question on the negative perception among parents with regard to ESL/ELL identification, Zaiba Beg spoke about the strength in being bilingual, and that the multi-cultural settlement workers in schools are being encouraged to communicate this to parents. Regarding the impact of the lack of funding on ELL achievement, she stated that Stages 1-4 ELL students receive accommodation for EQAO tests.

IP-14, moved by Harinder Malhi, that the report re English as a Second Language Review Report #2: Contextual and Demographic Profile, be received.

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7. Question Period

There were no questions.

8. Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

9. Adjournment

IP-15, moved by Jeff White, that the meeting adjourn (19:40 hours).

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