

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 25, 2015 at 18:00 hours.

Members present:

Rick Williams, Chair
Nokha Dakroub
Sue Lawton
Kathy McDonald
Harkirat Singh

Trustee also present:

Robert Crocker (18:40)

Member absent: (apology received)

David Green

Administration:

Jeff deFreitas, Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services
(Executive Member)

Jan Courtin, Superintendent of Education

Wendy Dowling, Superintendent of Education, Early Years

Ina Fournier, Superintendent of Education

Hazel Mason, Superintendent of Education

Scott Moreash, Associate Director, Instructional Support Services

Carol Speers, Superintendent of Education, Alternative Programs

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was slightly reordered.

IP-29, moved by Sue Lawton, 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, February 17, 2015

IP-30, moved by Kathy McDonald, that the Minutes of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, held February 17, 2015, be approved.

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4. Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – March 2015

IP-31, moved by Harkirat Singh, that the report re Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – March 2015, be received.

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5. Delegation by Stan Taylor - Retrospective Study of Rick Hansen Secondary School Pilot Project re Grade 9 Mathematics and Physical Education Offered in A/B Schedule Format

Stan Taylor stated that, since 2008 he has been advocating for delivery of year-round Grade 9 mathematics paired with physical education, A/B schedule. He read a statement written by former trustee, Steve Kavanagh, who had supported this initiative, requesting a study on students who participated in the Grades 9 and 10 mathematics and physical education twinned, year-round teaching model, to evaluate long range improvements and outcomes as a result of this model, at Rick Hansen Secondary School. Stan Taylor provided history of the pilot project which began in 2010 and he suggested that those students, who will be graduating in spring 2015, be invited to offer their retrospective views to conduct a follow-up study to the report on Evaluation of Full and Semestered Mathematics, prepared by Cathexis Consulting Inc.

Stan Taylor shared ideas and suggestions for a proposed review conducted with a random selection of students. He recommended a quantitative review of student records for the two Grade 9 cohorts who participated in the pilot project and for the two years after the program was cancelled, to prepare a comparative analysis between Grades 9 and 10 data and to study trending data. Stan Taylor remarked that he had submitted a critique of the Cathexis report; however, he has not received a reply. He requested a detailed response to his analysis of the report, and inquired why the Cathexis report was initiated before the second year of the pilot program was completed. Stan Taylor expressed his opinion that there are benefits of having the year-round mathematics and physical education program, which include reducing the pace of mathematics instruction, increased assistance from mentors and instructors, and eliminating the gap between successive courses. He suggested that these benefits can be achieved by offering students in the lower 50 percentile group the opportunity to take Grade 10 mathematics in the Fall semester and that alternately extending the A/B schedule to Grade 10 will eliminate the gap for all students.

5. Delegation by Stan Taylor - Retrospective Study of Rick Hansen Secondary School Pilot Project re Grade 9 Mathematics and Physical Education Offered in A/B Schedule Format (Continued)

Stating that his proposal for the A/B schedule has not been well-received, Stan Taylor remarked that those opposed to his proposal highlight the improvement in Grade 9 EQAO scores. He explained that the EQAO evaluation of mathematics is an assessment of the cumulative progress of students from Kindergarten to Grade 9, and noted that the focus of his proposal is to address issues in Grade 9 and beyond. He expressed the view that the assessment of success is to be measured by the level of student engagement, satisfaction, and achievement from Grade 9 through graduation. Stan Taylor advised that he had presented additional information to trustees by email. He read the contents of the email dated March 19, 2015, which referred to Peel DSB's response in an administrative report prepared in 2008. Stan Taylor noted that his email outlined in detail his concerns with regard to the contents of the administrative report and encouraged a follow-up study of the experience of students at Rick Hansen Secondary School. He advised that as a candidate for trustee, he had the opportunity to speak to hundreds of people in Wards 3 and 4 on this topic and many former graduates agreed that year-round mathematics would have helped them move forward. Chair Williams thanked Stan Taylor for his delegation and advised that a response will be provided at the next Instructional Programs and Curriculum Committee Meeting.

6. Social Risk Index (SRI) 2014

Reports titled Social Risk Index 2014 - Peel Region and Peel District School Board, and Social Risk Index 2014 – Summary of the Nine SRI Variables for Peel District School Board were circulated. Chief of Research and Accountability, Paul Favaro, advised that the Social Risk Index report for Peel DSB has been done since 1996 and the reports were developed to provide a general view for socio-economic vulnerability for Peel DSB schools and for Peel Region.

Paul Favaro read from the report for Peel Region and Peel DSB, listing the nine SRI variables: average household income; unemployment rate; education level; owner-occupied dwellings; mobility over one year; knowledge of Canada's official languages; recent immigrants; lone parent families; government transfer payments. He advised that the data for SRI 2014 calculations was obtained from Environics Analytics and he described the methodology for calculation of SRI 2014. Reviewing a Peel Region map showing Dissemination Areas and SRI scores for Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon, and with the help of PowerPoint slides, Paul Favaro explained cluster analysis and displayed data showing elementary and secondary school results by cluster, and alphabetical school listing. Referring to the report on SRI 2014, Summary of the Nine SRI Variables for Peel DSB, Paul Favaro reviewed a table showing comparison data for Peel Municipalities, Peel Region, Ontario, and Canada, maps for SRI 2014 by school boundaries, schools results by cluster, and alphabetical school listing. In terms of importance of data, he stated that community factors have an impact on educational outcomes, and students must be viewed in the context of their community.

6. Social Risk Index (SRI) 2014

A trustee inquired whether there is a difference in methodology between Statistics Canada and Environics Analytics' calculations and if more variables will be added in future. Paul Favaro stated that there are differences in the variables. He advised that the nine variables used are sufficient to cover socio-economic vulnerability and adding more variables may not change the index significantly. Responding to a trustee, Paul Favaro stated that no data is collected on ethnicity, race, and graduation rates. Chair Williams commented that these reports will be useful to the Ministry of Education. Paul Favaro stated that SRI data has been provided to the Ministry in 2008 and also to EQAO. Associate Director Moreash expressed appreciation for the work of Paul Favaro and the Research and Accountability team, and advised that the data is also used as a basis for allocating resources. Chair Williams thanked Paul Favaro for his work.

IP-32, moved by Nokha Dakroub, that the report re Social Risk Index (SRI) 2014, be received.

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Trustee McDonald retired from the meeting at 18:55 hours.

7. Teaching and Learning in a Digital World: Peel's Professional Development Summer Conference

Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Support Services, Jeff deFreitas, introduced Patrick McQuade, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, Tina Zita, Instructional Technology Resource Teacher, Cameron Watts, Teacher at Meadowvale Secondary School, and David Del Gobbo, Teacher at Stephen Lewis Secondary School.

Patrick McQuade provided an overview of the Conference on Teaching and Learning in a Digital World, held in August 2014, which supported over 700 teachers and was aimed at expanding their understanding of how technology can be used to engage students. He advised that the 2-day Conference focused on teaching and learning practices in the classroom. iPads were distributed to members to participate in an online exercise and explore events at the 2-day Conference, which included a collection of tweets and using digital playground. Patrick McQuade spoke of connections made at the Conference, a hands-on environment created for teachers, and advancements with 3-D printers.

Cameron Watts and David Del Gobbo described how 3-D printing works and provided information on classroom projects. They showed how students can make changes to existing projects and project components, use 3-D printing to test out models, and listed software used for various grade levels. The process of 3-D printing was demonstrated and samples of items created were distributed during the meeting. Questions of clarification from trustees were responded to with regard to: size of a 3-D printed object; costs and time involved; type of materials used.

IP-33, moved by Robert Crocker, that the oral report re Teaching and Learning in a Digital World: Peel's Professional Development Summer Conference, be received.

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8. 21st Century Teaching and Learning Update

Superintendent Jeff deFreitas stated that great strides have been made in moving Teaching and Learning forward by reaching out to other school boards and districts across the country and in the U.S., to learn what is being done in other jurisdictions. He stated that significant funds have been invested in BYOD for hardware and infrastructure, and the next step is teaching and training for staff. He introduced Superintendents of Education, Hazel Mason, Jan Courtin, and Ina Fournier to present.

Superintendent of Education, Hazel Mason, stated that the 21st Century Teaching and Learning initiative, which began approximately four years ago, is about using technology for learning, and making changes to meet the needs of students. Using a slide presentation and short videos, Superintendent Mason described how digital products such as iPhones and iPads can be used for updating orders, tracking inventory, and deliveries, as an integration of communication and technology, and she noted that students need to be ready to compete in a digital world. Hazel Mason advised that the 21st Century Teaching and Learning Committee, consisting of superintendents of education, Coordinator of Instructional Technology and Instructional Technology Resource Teachers has been expanded to include elementary and secondary staff.

Superintendent of Education, Jan Courtin, reported on a science inquiry project conducted at secondary schools, which provided training on use of iPads. The 4-day professional development opportunity for teachers included observing students' work in schools, consultation, and sharing of work. Jan Courtin provided information on costs, funding, grants, hardware supplied by Apple Canada, and professional development. She advised that the Math iTunesU resources created with support from Apple Canada will soon be published. Using a PowerPoint slide, Superintendent Courtin described the Apple Distinguished Educator (ADE) program, offered by Apple Canada.

With the help of a slide presentation, Matthew Oldridge presented on the comprehensive numeracy strategy, EngageMath, and iTunesU, which helps to introduce mathematics concepts. He advised that iTunesU enables engagement building, textbook interaction, working with various applications, students working on their own at home, and that the work does not have to be grade-specific. The presentation included information on Peel designed courses, iBook on capturing mathematical thinking, practice examples, how students can create their own mathematics, and use of Minecraft digital game.

Superintendent of Education, Ina Fournier, expressed appreciation for Apple Canada's support. She reported that Google Camp is scheduled to take place at Central Peel Secondary School, on May 2, 2015, from 8.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. at a cost of \$25 per day. The event will include four sessions to choose from and will host a keynote speaker, Jonathan So, a Grade 2 teacher at Ray Lawson Public School. Ina Fournier advised that 290 people have enrolled in Google Camp so far, and she invited trustees to attend.

Superintendent Mason reviewed changes made at Peel DSB to enhance learning. She spoke of the need to discuss pedagogy using technology tools, Social Risk Index, and the goal to ensure that every student in Peel graduates regardless of their Social Risk Index. A video showing how China and India are using technology for learning, was viewed. Chair Williams thanked the presenters, commenting that it recognizes innovation.

8. 21st Century Teaching and Learning Update (Continued)

A trustee inquired whether students are being taught computer code language and applications. Hazel Mason replied in the affirmative, adding that many schools participated in Hour of Code, one school has published their apps, and discussions are taking place to use code as a creative way to work on mathematics. Ina Fournier advised that students in the International Business and Technology program have created apps which are being sold. A trustee commented on the importance of using Peel teachers for professional development, to reduce learning costs and enhance growth.

IP-34, moved by Nokha Dakroub, that the oral update report re 21st Century Teaching and Learning, be received.

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9. Meeting Beyond 20:30 Hours

IP-35, moved by Sue Lawton, that the meeting continue beyond 20:30 hours.

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10. Explore High Skills: A Pre-Specialist High Skills Major Program for Grades 9 and 10

An information brochure on the existing Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs was circulated. Superintendent of Education, Carol Speers, stated that there are 42 SHSM programs in 27 Peel schools, for Grades 11 and 12, and parents have indicated interest in having the programs in Grade 9.

Using a PowerPoint slide presentation, Adrian Graham, Coordinating Principal for Student Success, Alternative Programs, shared background information for the Pre-SHSM program creation and exploring the content and areas of learning. Debbie Viera, Instructional Resource Teacher, Program Pathways and SHSM, reviewed the six components of the pathways program called Explore High Skills, which has been created in response to the Student Attract and Retain Committee's recommendations, as well as parent and school requests. The components are: focused learning activities; community involvement; learning skills; certification; experiential learning activity; individual pathway plan.

Adrian Graham explained the program delivery models and reviewed program timelines, indicating that applications will be submitted in May 2015 and programs will begin in September 2016. A map indicating locations of schools offering the 2014-2015 SHSM and regional programs, and a flyer providing information on the Explore High Skills program were circulated. Responses to trustees' questions of clarification included: busing eligibility and students who wish to leave the program in Grade 11 will follow the same rules as for Regional Learning Choices Programs; the program will be part of the careers curriculum; entry into SHSM will not be conditional on attending the pre-SHSM program.

IP-36, moved by Harkirat Singh, that the oral report re Explore High Skills: A Pre-Specialist High Skills Major Program for Grades 9 and 10, be received.

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11. Information from Regional Learning Choices Programs (RLCP) Committee

Superintendent deFreitas advised that the report is a summary of discussions at the Regional Learning Choices Programs Committee.

IP-37, moved by Robert Crocker, that the report re Information from Regional Learning Choices Programs (RLCP) Committee, be received.

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12. Updated Course Codes: Curriculum Policy Documents to be Released in 2014-2015 School Year

IP-38, moved by Sue Lawton, that the report re Updated Course Codes: Curriculum Policy Documents to be Released in 2014-2015 School Year, be received.

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13. Question Period

There were no questions.

14. Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

15. Adjournment

IP-39, moved by Harkirat Singh, that the meeting adjourn (21:00 hours).

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