

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, September 18, 2013 at 18:10 hours.

Members present:

Rick Williams, Chair
Beryl Ford
Sue Lawton
Harinder Malhi
Janet McDougald
Suzanne Nurse

Trustees also present:

David Green
Meredith Johnson

Member absent: (apologies received)

Jeff White

Administration:

Shawn Moynihan, Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services
(Executive Member)
Jeff deFreitas, Superintendent of Education, Early Years
Patricia Noble, Superintendent of Education

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. Approval of Agenda

Chair Williams noted that the report for Item 6.1, Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – September 2013, has been included at the end of the agenda package.

IP-26 moved by Suzanne Nurse, 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, May 15, 2013
Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Physical Planning and Building Committee and the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, June 4, 2013

IP-27, moved by David Green:

1. That, the Minutes of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee Meeting, held May 15, 2013, be approved;
2. That, the Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Instructional Programs / Curriculum Committee and the Physical Planning and Building Committee, held June 4, 2013, be approved.

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4. Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – September 2013

IP-28 moved by Meredith Johnson, that the report re Celebrating Faith and Culture Backgrounder – September 2013, be received.

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5. Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee Meeting Dates 2013-2014 - Revised

IP-29, moved by Beryl Ford, that the report re Revised Instructional Programs/Curriculum Committee Meeting Dates 2013-2014, be approved. (APPENDIX I)

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6. 21st Century Teaching and Learning: Report on “Teaching and Learning in a Digital World” Conference

Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Support Services, Shawn Moynihan, reported on the 21st Century Teaching and Learning in a Digital World Conference held on August 21-22, 2013 AT Castlebrooke Secondary School, with 300 registered participants and an additional 300 walk-in participants who were accommodated. He thanked Patrick McQuade, Coordinator for Science and Technological Education, the Instructional Technology Resource Teachers (ITRT), and the conference participants.

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Patrick McQuade described the conference components, which included: keynote presentations by George Couros, Division Principal of Innovative Teaching and Learning for Parkland School Division; Reuben Puentedura, Founder and President of Hippasus and creator of the SAMR Model (Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition); sessions on how to use 21st Century Teaching and Learning; transforming practices to improve student learning; hands-on support for social media such as Twitter and Blog posts; teaching and learning apps; networking opportunities for educators.

6. 21st Century Teaching and Learning: Report on “Teaching and Learning in a Digital World” Conference (Continued)

Information packages were handed out to the trustees which included a set of objects and an iPad Mini to enable them to experience the atmosphere at the conference. Information Technology Resource Teachers (ITRTs) assisted trustees with using the Aurasma app on the iPad Mini. Patrick McQuade spoke about the Aurasma app which has an augmented reality platform to produce video or tweets, noting that it is currently being used in Peel schools. He outlined the benefits of technology, stating that it has enabled students to find content and blog in English and French, and has empowered educators in Peel. Patrick McQuade provided links and hashtags for further information. Chair Williams thanked Patrick McQuade for the presentation.

IP-30, moved by Beryl Ford, that the oral report re 21st Century Teaching and Learning: on “Teaching and Learning in a Digital World” Conference, be received.

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7. Reading Assessment in Peel DSB Elementary Schools

Superintendent Moynihan welcomed Maria-Luisa Lebar, Instructional Coordinator for Literacy, who provided an overview on system-wide reading assessments and reading assessment tools used in Peel with the primary goal of improving reading achievement. She noted that the purpose of reading assessment is to make students literate learners, learning to read and reading to learn, be effective communicators, and critical thinkers. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Maria-Luisa Lebar outlined the advantages of board-wide assessments such as: common language for reporting to parents; monitor and improve student learning; inform and improve teacher practice; build knowledge of curriculum expectations; fairness and equity; consistent assessment tools across the school board. She advised that common reading assessment tools such as PM Benchmark, GB+ and CASI used from Kindergarten to Grade 2, enable educators to identify and address needs, target reading or literacy goals, and make informed decisions about reading instruction. She stated that data obtained from these assessments helps schools to identify patterns and trends, provide a better understanding of the reading curriculum, develop school-wide learning goals, and plan for professional learning that supports literacy development. Maria-Luisa Lebar invited staff of Corliss Public School and Morning Star Middle School to share their experience of implementing two reading assessments, PM Benchmark and CASI, which have positively impacted student achievement in literacy.

Using video clips and a PowerPoint presentation, Kaylene Brar, Jelena Tomasevic, and Sonika Wadhwa, teachers at Corliss Public School, shared the practice of using the PM Benchmark reading assessment tool to prepare running records, in-depth analysis, individual student assessments, creating student profiles, creating guided reading rules, reading strategies, and implementation of small group instruction. They shared their experience of using classroom instruction, new learning, reading levels and comprehension, using fiction and non-fiction books.

7. Reading Assessment in Peel DSB Elementary Schools (Continued)

Sonika Wadhwa spoke about the benefits of reviewing data and having a support team for small group instruction, which included the principal, librarian, English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher and Early Learning teacher.

Dawn Addison, Principal of Morning Star Middle School, spoke about using CASI (Comprehension Attitude Strategies Interests) as a reading assessment tool. She stated that the process involved reviewing the greatest area of school-based need, collaborative inquiry, CASI assessment, and intense reading and writing strategies. She highlighted the need to research data to review progress. Teachers, Sabina Sayed, Teralyn Phipps, Shanta Antoine, Jasmine Mann, and Stephanie Minard, shared their experience of using reading assessment tools and provided information on: how CASI tests work in schools by using data to identify individual reading strategies; the CASI rubric and exemplars; the learning process; applying consistency in classrooms; formative and summative assessments for school improvement; literacy goals; process of tracking students using criteria from CASI, EQAO and Report Cards; intense reading program; classroom strategies for reading and writing; sample inferring activity.

A trustee commented that boys seem to be slower in learning to read and asked whether there was change in that area. Principal Addison indicated that there was a noticeable difference in single gender classes. Non-fiction texts were made available as boys gravitate towards them. Principal Addison and Morning Star Middle School staff responded to a trustee's questions of clarification regarding single-gender classes, their benefits, variety of texts used, and parent involvement. It was advised that there would be benefits because material available today exposes the students to different ways of learning and that parents are informed at school council meetings, through meeting minutes, parent information nights, EQAO nights, mother-daughter nights, father's night, and parent volunteers. Chair Williams and trustees thanked the presenters and commended them on the work being done in schools.

IP-31, moved by Janet McDougald, that the oral report re Reading Assessment in Peel DSB Elementary Schools, be received.

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8. Reports on Student Achievement on Provincial Assessments

Superintendent Shawn Moynihan advised that the 2013 EQAO scores for primary and junior divisions will be released today and the secondary scores will be released on September 25, 2013. He reported on the key messages from the EQAO assessments on Literacy and Numeracy for Grades 3 and 6. In Primary Division 69% of Peel DSB students in Grade 3 achieved Levels 3 and 4 in reading, while 78% achieved Levels 3 and 4 in writing, and in mathematics 66% of students achieved Levels 3 and 4. In the Junior Division, Grade 6, Levels 3 and 4 were achieved by 75% of Peel students in reading, 77% in writing, and 54% in mathematics. He stated that in Numeracy, Grade 6 achievement in EQAO appears to be declining for every board in the province. The overview of results of the EQAO Assessments of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics for Primary (Grades 1-3) and Junior Divisions (Grades 4-6) for 2012-2013 was circulated.

8. Reports on Student Achievement on Provincial Assessments (Continued)

Paul Favaro, Chief of Research and Accountability, provided an overview of the highlights and trends of Peel DSB's EQAO results over time from 2007-2008 to 2012-2013 for primary and junior divisions in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. He outlined five significant findings: Peel is at the provincial average in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics for Grades 3 and 6; Peel has met provincial targets for Writing in Grades 3 and 6 with 75% of students at levels 3 or 4; the gender gap remains a concern for Reading and Writing, but not for Mathematics; English Language Learners' (ELL) performance has considerably improved in this year's results; Special Education students are showing improvement but are still below provincial average.

Using a PowerPoint slide presentation, Paul Favaro reviewed the results over time for the last six years, for Peel DSB's primary division, indicating that: in reading there is an improvement of 3% and in writing there is an improvement of 2% over last year, while in both reading and writing there is 11% improvement over the last six years; in mathematics scores have remained roughly the same with a 1% decrease over last year as well as over the last six years, which is a pattern seen across the province; gender gap differences are significant. He reviewed the ELL scores which have significantly risen in reading by 14% over the last year and 29% over the last six years, in writing by 9% over last year and by 24% over last six years. In mathematics ELLs were up by 9% over the last year and by 14% over the last six years. Paul Favaro mentioned that ELL scores were above the provincial targets in both literacy and numeracy in 2012-2013. Students with Special Needs showed an improvement in reading by 7% over the last year and 13% over the last six years, writing scores were up by 2% from last year and trending upwards by 10% over the last six years. He noted however, that Special Needs students' mathematics scores are trending downwards by 6% over the last six years and Peel DSB's scores are below the provincial average in all three areas for Special Needs category. Shawn Moynihan responded to questions of clarification from a trustee with regard to reasons why Peel DSB results are significantly lower than the province in special education and whether Peel is including more students than other school boards in the testing process.

Paul Favaro reviewed slides illustrating EQAO results for junior division, and compared the results with the primary division noting that they have the same pattern, with an improvement over six years as well as an improvement over last year in reading and writing. Mathematics scores remain the same for both primary and junior divisions. There is no difference reported in scores for mathematics based on gender.

Reviewing the charts indicating scores for junior division students, Paul Favaro noted that reading and writing scores were up by 2% from last year and reading increased by 12% over the last six years, while writing scores increased by 11% over the last six years. In mathematics, scores decreased by 1% over last year and 5% over the last six years. Among ELLs, there was significant improvement across six years, showing that reading scores increased 41% over the last six years, while writing increased by 39% over the last six years. In mathematics ELL students' scores increased by 51% over the last six years. Paul Favaro reviewed the scores of Grade 6 Special Education students which showed that reading improved by 12% over last six years and writing improved by 9% over the last six years. However, in mathematics scores remained the same since last year and a downward trend of 6% was seen over the last six years.

8. Reports on Student Achievement on Provincial Assessments (Continued)

A trustee commented that the provincial mathematics scores were high in 2008-2009 but a significant decline was noted across the province in the following years, indicating that it could be the result of the test or the curriculum. Paul Favaro explained that changes in the results are not contributable to tests because the tests are equated. Another trustee indicated that as the decline is across the province, it would be related to the curriculum and she asked whether the Minister is investigating. Superintendent Moynihan stated that the Ministry recognizes that the mathematics scores in junior division are declining. He explained that Ontario has a slightly different curriculum in mathematics than other provinces, that some concepts are being taught in a different order, and that there have been suggestions for a re-write of the curriculum. Mary Fiore, Coordinator for Mathematical Literacy, advised that the Ministry is expected to refresh the Mathematics curriculum. Superintendent Moynihan added that through School Effectiveness Leader, Jill Ott, the Student Work Study teachers will be focusing on numeracy. Shawn Moynihan and Paul Favaro responded to questions of clarification from a trustee regarding comparison of scores nationwide and how the curriculum is developed. Shawn Moynihan stated that trustees will receive detailed reports for their schools shortly.

IP-32, moved by Suzanne Nurse, that the oral report re Student Achievement on Provincial Assessments, be received.

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9. Communications

IP-33, moved by Beryl Ford, that the following communication items, be received:

1. Release of The Ontario Curriculum, Canadian and World Studies, Grades 9 and 10 2013 (Revised)
2. Topic for October 11, 2013 Professional Activity Day

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10. Question Period

Trustee Ford asked about an earlier report on the Sexual Abuse Prevention Program led by the Social Work department which was expected to be introduced in schools. She asked whether the program has been in place in schools or as part of the curriculum. Superintendent Moynihan will consult with Superintendent Louise Sirisko and bring back a report to the next meeting in October.

11. Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

12. Adjournment

IP-35, moved by Janet McDougald, that the meeting adjourn (20:00 hours).

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