

GECD SB- IEAC Committee Meeting

Virtual Meeting January 21, 2021

Attendance:

Director Erin Kelly	Dr. Clara Howitt	Tina DeCastro
Tyler White	Brienne John	Adrian Klein
Alan Halberstadt (Trustee)	Cecil Isaac	Kim John
Donna Grayer	Crystal Michener	Rebecca Major
Loyell Bigjohn	Emily Lockhart	Michael Harrington
Rick MacMillan	Carrie Anne (Caldwell Rep)	Ron LeClair (Trustee)
Mike Wilcox	Shelley Armstrong	Shawn Maheux
Rachel Olivero	Toni Lauzon	David Deans

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement- C. Howitt

Opening- Cecil Isaac

Review of Principles of Engagement- C. Howitt

Review of the Agenda- C. Howitt

The Agenda and the previous minutes were moved to approval and approved.

Presentation -Supporting Anti-Racism Education Regulation – Consultation on Framework (R. Olivero – Equity and Inclusion)

Rachel:

Our Board of Trustees unanimously noted that we need to put an anti-racism regulation in place. This does not in any way detract from the supports that have been happening for our Indigenous students. This would be something that would support racialized students, our black students and our students of colour, in addition to our Indigenous students. On our website we have a supporting anti-racism education links to our *Equity and Inclusion* policy and regulation; our *Human Rights* policy and regulation and our *Bullying Prevention* plan. There is also a link to our *Black Student Voices Matter* report, which we created over the summer of 2020. We heard from the voices of our secondary black students and asked them what about their experiences of racism in our schools.

What we want to do is make a new regulation focused specifically on anti-racism. We want to make sure that we are encapsulating the voices of our diverse community. On your agenda, you will see a link to the actual form seeking feedback from our community. We wanted to make sure you were aware of this initiative and invite you and encourage you to please complete the form and share with us the experiences that you have had in navigating through our system. The form is completely anonymous and confidential. At the very end, we are asking if you are interested in becoming involved, to please submit your name. This feedback link went live at the beginning of January. We have over 200 responses to date. I'm so delighted with the response that we have from the community. We really think it's important we get the perspective from this committee and the Indigenous community. I would be pleased to answer any questions if anyone has anything they would like to ask.

Kim:

A presentation was provided on Restorative Practices previously. We suggested the name of Sharon George from the Indigenous Justice Program that works at the courthouse. I just touched base with her recently and asked if there was

any outreach and she said she never heard from the GECDSB. It is important to us that when we make suggestions that there is follow up. Will we have opportunity to be at the table when it comes to the development of policy on anti-racism. We will fill out this form and thank you for bringing that to our attention. We will list incidents of bullying and racism that's happened directly within the school board and make sure you have that information from an Indigenous perspective. But I think it's more than us just filling out forms. We want to see authentic Indigenous involvement.

Clara:

Thank you Kim for your response in that people on this committee do want to have a voice and provide feedback through that link. My understanding is, and Rachel you can confirm, is that the work begins once we have input from various stakeholders, including the voice of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC). That when the development of the policy regulation begins that Indigenous voice would be represented on the committee. Would that be correct?

Rachel:

Yes that is absolutely correct Clara, and I will be following up.

I'm not sure what happened with Sharon George, this is something that I will follow up with. With respect to making sure that our resources are reflective of the communities we serve, there are different portfolios. So in terms of the Indigenous Education, that falls under Dr. Clara Howitt and Equity and Inclusion falls under Dr. Sharon Pyke. So they do work hand in hand. They do work together, but it is two different portfolios and you are absolutely correct that we do need to do a better job of ensuring they are seamlessly put together. So thank you, Kim, for bringing that to our attention.

Kim:

Thank you for taking note on that. Our hope is that things can get in line so that when it lifts, we are ready to go.

Clara:

There will be more information about a review that we want to occur throughout our system in our libraries, specifically in terms of Indigenous resources and topics. We will really be looking forward to coming back to the committee seeking input on the guidelines for the removal and addition of books that best represent Indigenous culture, history and people.

Presentation – Jordan's Principle (Superintendent Mike Wilcox and Social Worker Toni Lauzon)

Mike:

Toni Lauzon has presented previously to IEAC about Jordan's Principle. Today, Toni will provide a brief update on the resources and services that some of our families have accessed through this federal fund. Part of Toni's responsibilities is to support families accessing Jordan's Principle funding when families identify a need for their child. We're happy we can support our families with their applications and will continue to provide this support to our families who feel that they need this support with these applications, which can be very lengthy. Toni's been invaluable in providing information to many different groups, including presentations to our administrators, our Special Education Advisory Committee, to Learning Support Teachers and Social Workers. In addition, she has presented to community agencies, such as Family Respite and John McGivney Children's Centre. I'll turn the presentation over to Toni to provide you with an update.

Toni:

I started at the board in 2017 and noticed a gap in services available to First Nations students. I mentioned to some of the families I was working with that Jordan's Principle may be an appropriate support for some of the things they had outstanding needs for and that snowballed from there.

Toni proceeded to review the slide presentation on Jordan's Principle.

Crystal:

I just want to thank Toni for everything she does because if it wasn't for her informing me of Jordan's Principle, my girls would have been lost, so thank you very much, Toni.

Clara:

Families do not have to work with the school board, but it is great that the school board provides this service. Thank you Crystal for that kind comment of acknowledgement for Toni and her work. Seeing that there are no further questions, we will move to the next presentation. I defer to my colleagues, Superintendent Shelley Armstrong and Mr. Shawn Maheux to present to us on Indigenous Education Funding.

**Presentation – Indigenous Education Funding
(Superintendent S. Armstrong and Manager of Finance S. Maheux)**

Shelley:

Hello, I am the Superintendent of Business at the board and have been with the board just under two years. With me is Shawn Maheux, the board's Manager Finance and he'll take you through the presentation of the financial overview of the revenue and expenditures for Indigenous education here at the board.

Shawn:

Shawn proceeded to review the slide presentation on the Indigenous Education Financial Overview.

Kim:

I have to say I have a preference on how it used to be presented to us in an income and expenses statement, as opposed to a PowerPoint like this where we would see it all play out.

When you are talking about the 2000 students in Indigenous education, that also includes the English classes, am I correct?

Clara:

Yes, that would include the NBE students overall. The board has developed an Indigenous Education Protocol with seven principles and one of those principles is a dedication to Indigenous education and building capacity amongst all students in the district. It's just wonderful that they decided to ensure that every student in the district, before they graduate, must take at minimum one Indigenous course. We replaced the grade 11 English with the NBE course, and we are now in our fourth year of implementation. So, you are correct, Kim, that is part of the exponential growth of credits for pupils with an Indigenous foundation course.

Kim:

It's an amazing course.

Another thing is just how it's worded. As an example, look at Jordan's Principle and Spec Ed. If a child is in the Spec Ed realm, that's not an added expense; that is something that would already be. The Jordan's Principle is coming in as an

attachment to that individual child. That's their individual funding, regardless of whether a child is identified as Indigenous under the board or not. If they are in Spec Ed, they are in Spec Ed.

Clara:

You are correct, a student is a student and if they are a student with special education needs, they would receive special education services. I think the point Mr. Maheux was bringing up is that students are not excluded.

Mike:

We do provide EA supports to students in the board who require that and some of that would be Indigenous students who would be covered through the Jordan's Principle federal funding.

Clara:

The benefit of Jordan's Principle is it really does help the board to provide an enhanced support. In our district, the support of an EA would never be exclusive to a single student, but through Jordan's Principle that may happen. Money does go to fund supporting special education that would include Indigenous students as well.

Kim:

I know how awesome and creative the district is with using funds, such as taking the literacy camp funding and redefining it for us so that it fits our needs. Thank you for the clarification.

Are we going to be getting the Action Plan in a presentation? Does that still require our approval? We use to have to sign it. How has the Action Plan changed?

Indigenous Education Board Action Plan

-Follow up meeting – Monday, Feb 8th

Clara:

The Indigenous Education Board Action Plan was just received in the last two weeks. We are compiling that report. I was going to recommend to this committee that we reconvene on February 8th from 4:30pm to 5:30pm to actually review that document. We would share the initial information that we presented in November in greater detail aligned to the funding provided and used. We do require committee approval. We require a signature from a member of the committee. So in our effort to be transparent with everyone, we wanted to set up a subsequent meeting as we compile that report and will have it ready in two weeks. We would like to present it to the committee, seeking approval before we submit it to the ministry.

I do believe the information presented demonstrates our Board's commitment to the work of supporting Indigenous education; both our mandates of directly supporting Indigenous students and building the capacity of all students in our system. I am very proud of the road that we have traveled, even at times when it has been difficult. It has been an important journey and continues to be of paramount importance in our district. I will be following up with the committee and I'll ask you to mark your calendars for February 8th, when we will present the actual Board Aboriginal Plan (BAP) to you in a presentation that we will make visible through Teams. Then we will be seeking the commitment and approval of this committee before we submit the BAP formally to the Ministry of Education. Please know the work is in action. For example, we hired the academic coaches to support Indigenous students. The Board Aboriginal Plan is a formalized approval from this committee before we send it to the ministry. If anybody has any ideas, we welcome input at any time because your voice is valuable to us.

Responding to Questions from the Nov 16h Meeting

Clara:

In the minutes, there were a couple of action items, and I would like to speak to. One of those action items to follow-up on was tutoring. I believe it was Ms. John that spoke about the importance of planning backward so that there is not a delayed response around tutoring each year. Each year we go through a process of seeking qualified tutors to support in providing free service to our identified students. There are many layers to this process. We are committed to start this process in August of 2021 to get ahead of the process and ensure we can provide the service in September. One good thing that has happened this year, we have developed a partnership with the University of that has led to the hiring of students at the University of Windsor, who are interested in supporting tutoring.

I turn to my colleague, Superintendent Mike Wilcox, as there was a question on tutoring of students with an LD profile and making connections with LDAO.

Mike:

I did reach out to Maryanne Frederick, Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association, Windsor-Essex. She's also a member on our SEAC and is a very valuable community partner. LDA-Windsor-Essex provide students identified with a learning disability with tutoring services. They regularly advertise these sessions and you can get more information by contacting their office. They are currently located in the John McGivney Children's Centre Building. Please know that if anybody is interested in more specialized tutoring, supports for their child or their children, Toni can support an application to Jordan's Principle.

Clara:

There was a question, I believe from Mr. Harrington, about on track to success, in terms of support for Indigenous students. I did follow up with my colleague, Superintendent Josh Canty, who has reached out to Liam at the United Way. There is a conversation that has begun between Student Success and United Way. So we will be coming back to you on more information as that conversation continues, but I don't have a definitive answer about that possibility at this time.

Another question previously asked by Louise was whether there was an age restriction for the tutoring support through the John McGivney Children's Centre (JMCC). Mike, are you able to respond to that?

Mike:

Sorry for that confusion it's not JMCC that provides the tutoring, it is LDA-Windsor-Essex, as they are now currently located inside the JMCC building. Let me reach out to LDA-W-E and perhaps then forward that information to Clara so she can forward it to IEAC.

Clara:

With our Indigenous Education Board Action Plan we are required to do an assessment this year, which would include a survey. Tina, could you please explain that to the committee?

Tina:

We've done this in the past. The assessment itself is a series of questions that help us to get a sense of improvement; how we've been doing so far in the area of Indigenous education.

We will send out a link to this survey to the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee. We ask that you fill it in prior to our meeting on February 8th. The survey asks your perspective on how we're doing, which is included in our report to the ministry.

These minutes will likely not be done before our next meeting, but I will commit to sending out both PowerPoint presentations to you by Monday at the latest. The link to the Board Aboriginal Plan Assessment survey and a date that we ask you to kindly respond by will be included in that communication. If there is follow-up that Superintendent Wilcox has regarding tutoring through LDAO by that time, I will include it as well.

Closing- Cecil Isaac
Meeting Adjourned.