

Upper Grand District School Board

Program Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

The Program Committee of Upper Grand District School Board met on Tuesday, March 2, 2021, virtually and in the Board Room commencing at 7:04 p.m.

The Chairperson Trustee Topping presided, and the following Trustees were present: Bailey, Edwards, Foley, Lustgarten Evoy, and MacNeil, together with student Trustees Kim Tran and Taran Fournier. Also in attendance were Director of Education Rogers, Student Success Lead Zen, and Superintendents Heaslip, Lindsay, McDonald, Regier, Slater, and Van Ooteghem.

Agenda

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the agenda be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

Approval of Minutes

Trustee MacNeil moved that the minutes of the meeting held on February 2, 2021 be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

Report from Student Trustees

Student Trustees Kim Tran and Taran Fournier provided an update on events from February. It was reported that, at the February 23rd student senate meeting, 14 students attended through google meet. Trustee MacNeil and Frances Norlen were also in attendance. The main focus of the meeting was the election of the 2021-2022 Student Trustees. Four submissions for Student Trustees were received, 3 urban and 1 rural. Vikasani Kuganesan, from Centre Dufferin DHS (currently attending the Remote Secondary School) was acclaimed to the position of rural Student Trustee. Following the electronic ballot process, Emilie Hill, from Centennial CVI, (currently attending the Remote Secondary School) was named the successful urban Student Trustee for 2021-2022. Following the election, student senators shared insights about the challenges of pivoting from remote learning to in person, as well as the challenges of managing one's physical and mental health.

Thanks were expressed to Superintendent Morrell for his many years of involvement with the student senate and the Student Trustees. Superintendent Morell supported, listened, helped, and encouraged students to be successful in their roles as student senators and Student Trustees. Superintendent Morrell was wished the best of luck in his new adventures. A warm welcome was expressed to Acting Superintendent Pat Hamilton and congratulations were offered to the new Student Trustees.

Recommendation # 1

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the verbal update from Student Trustees be received, with thanks.

The motion carried.

Mental Health Update

Mental Health and Addiction Lead Marino advised that the “Umbrella” theme for March, is Mindfulness; being present in the moment with our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment. When we practice mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we are sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future. In a time when the past and future can feel like scary places, mindfulness is a great way to reduce anxiety by focusing on what is happening in the moment. Statistically, it was noted that mindfulness improves anxiety by up to 60%, provides 50% improvement for insomnia, improves overall cognition, and can increase productivity by 120%.

In a recent press release, Communications and Community Engagement Officer Loney announced the new parent mental health website. The website was designed to be simple, straight forward, and easy to access. Content and development were a result of conversations with parents, community, and PIC members, who identified areas of need. The website included sections on parent self-care, learning at home, and other resources. It was noted that now, thanks to Immigration Services, newsletters were translated into five different languages, providing more accessibility for parents. The educator website for student mental health and wellbeing, now has a highly curated content, and is aligned with the Ministry of Education’s Student Action Kits for Mental Health. The Mental Health and Me (student website) increased from 141 users to over 2500. Trustees expressed thanks for the presentation and all the continued work in the area of Mental Health.

Recommendation # 2

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the verbal update on Mental Health be received, with thanks.

The motion carried.

Continuing Education

Principal of Continuing Education, Julie Bodiam advised that the main focus of continuing education was to serve adult learners with credit programs, ESL language training, skills upgrading and PLAR evaluations. Credit programs include day, night, summer school, correspondence courses, and credits on the go (SWAF). Due to COVID-19 restrictions last year, summer school was held remotely, and literacy and numeracy support were not offered. Grade 8 Reach Ahead program had 313 credits granted. For this year, it is planned to add physical education and native courses, as well as literacy catch up programs. The delivery of remote courses provided more access to students in rural areas, which will continue to be offered this year. In 2019, the Personal Support Worker Program (PSW) was offered, and provided the opportunity to earn a PSW certificate. This program is currently delivered at Tytler PS, and will be offered in Dufferin in the Spring, in partnership with Dufferin Oaks. ESL courses are offered all year long to adults 18+ who are newcomers to Canada. For parents enrolled in the LINC Federal program for ESL, there is on-site childcare provided for pre-school children 6 months to 5 years of age. Trustees expressed thanks for the presentation and the work done in Continuing Education.

Recommendation # 3

Trustee Edwards moved that the Continuing Education presentation be received.

The motion carried.

Grade 9 De-Streamed Math

Together, Student Success Lead Zen and Remote Secondary Vice-Principal McDowell provided an in-depth report on grade 9 de-streamed math. Academic and applied course types or “streams” have been in place for decades. The original intention behind applied courses was to provide a different pedagogical approach to learning. Over time,

the applied course type has become perceived as less academically rigorous. Data showed that the students most likely to be streamed into this course type are students who are Indigenous, Black, from low-income households, and/or have disabilities or other special education needs. Students in the applied course stream are limited in the courses they can take in later grades, which in turn limits their access to post-secondary pathways. De-streaming is a first, small step in anti-racism/anti-colonialism work and needs to be viewed from the lens as an opportunity to put these core beliefs of Student Success into action. It is planned to phase out grade 9 academic and applied courses and phase in Grade 9 de-streamed courses; dismantle the systemic discrimination associated with streamed grade 9 courses that have contributed to the marginalization of some students; remove barriers and support more students to graduate from secondary school and pursue post-secondary education pathways of their choice. Cultural shifts in schools and boards, increased educator capacity, and increased student engagement, achievement, and well-being are the de-streaming goals. The next steps in the implementation plan included short to long term outcomes, from June 2022 to 2026 and beyond. Trustees expressed thanks for the presentation and the work done for the implementation of de-streaming math.

Recommendation # 4

Trustee MacNeil moved that the Grade 9 De-Streamed Math presentation be received.

The motion carried.

2021/22 JK FI On-Time Application Overview

Manager of Planning Angrish presented the 2021/22 JK FI On-time Application Overview. She noted that the on-time window for applications to attend Junior Kindergarten (JK) French Immersion (FI) in 2021/22 opened on January 5, 2021 and closed on January 22, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. The on-time window was extended by one week due to COVID-19 restrictions. Where the number of on-time applications to a school offering JK FI does not exceed the JK FI cap imposed, applicants are placed directly into JK FI. Where there are more JK FI applicants than spaces available, a random selection process is required. Manager of Planning Angrish provided preliminary information on the number of applications received for JK FI for the 2021/22 school year, as well as a comparison with previous years' on-time application

information. She reported that JK FI caps remained unchanged from the last year and there were 598 applications received for the 644 JK FI spaces available. This count included only on-time, in-boundary applications, as only applications for home FI schools were accepted. Staff expect to continue to receive JK FI applications until the end of the current school year. The random selection process took place virtually on Thursday, February 4, 2021. On February 4, 2021, placement/waitlist emails were sent out, notifying parents of their application status (Offered Placement or Waitlist). Late applications and out of area/out of district applications are only considered where space exists within a school's cap. If space does not exist, a school-based waitlist is created. Late applicants may receive placement on a first-come, first-served basis. Any waitlisted on-time or late applicant must be registered in the Board's regular track school to remain on the waitlist and be eligible for placement in JK FI. Siblings of students registered in FI continue to be given priority access to FI, and sibling priority remains a consideration during the random selection process.

Recommendation # 5

Trustee Bailey moved that the report PLN: 21-02 "2021/22 JK FI On-Time Application Overview" be received for information.

The motion carried.

OPSBA Report – nil report

Other Business – nil report

Adjournment

Trustee MacNeil moved that this Committee adjourn at 8:06 p.m. to report to the Board.

The motion carried.

This document is available in alternate formats upon request.