

Upper Grand District School Board

Program Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, June 1, 2021

The Program Committee of Upper Grand District School Board met on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, virtually and in the Board Room commencing at 7:00 p.m.

This past week, the news reported that 215 unnamed graves of Indigenous children were found at a former residential school in Kamloops BC. The Upper Grand DSB offered sympathy and condolences to all Indigenous families and friends and those of Indigenous background. With respect for these peoples, a moment of silence was held.

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

Agenda

Trustee MacNeil 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 Lustgarten Evoy moved that the minutes of the meeting held on May 4, 2021 be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

Achieving by Believing

In her opening comments, Trustee MacNeil noted that every year, for over 15 years, the Upper Grand DSB has been presenting Achieving by Believing awards to Grade 8 and Grade 12 students. Students are selected by their schools to receive the award, and the

award recognizes their strength, courage, and perseverance in overcoming personal obstacles. While the reason for a student winning an award varies, the common thread that ties them together is the fact that these students set goals for success and accepted help from those around them.

The Achieving by Believing award celebrates each student's success at achieving these goals and provides them with support as they transition to either high school or their post-secondary pathways. In addition, these awards are also a tribute to the staff in our system who have supported the students.

This year, Trustee MacNeil was excited to share that we have 41 Grade 8 recipients and 41 Grade 12 recipients! We are so thrilled and honoured to celebrate the success of all of these students. Their incredible resilience, grit, and determination, in an especially challenging year, are nothing short of remarkable and we are so proud of their accomplishments.

On behalf of the Upper Grand District School Board, Trustee MacNeil extended congratulations to all recipients of the Achieving by Believing award, and wished them continued success in the future as they transition into the next stage of their lives.

Vice-Principal Secondary Remote School McDowell shared a message to the recipients of the awards presented this evening.

"We will focus on your strengths and achievements, not the roads that brought you here, but the mountains you have all climbed, and the determination you all possess. Each one of you share a special something, the ability to get up, dust yourself off, and keep going. That feeling of learning that you can overcome, persevere, and improve, will serve you better than any book or equation you will learn in school. The awards given out tonight are a testament to that learning".

Vice Principal Secondary Remote School McDowell presented the elementary grade 8 as well as secondary grade 12 Achieving by Believing awards to a total of 82 students.

In closing, Student Success Lead Zen noted that, tonight, we celebrated the success of a special group of young people. From our students, we have heard stories of determination, resiliency hard work and success. We have heard about the importance of a caring adult or adults in the lives of our young people, whether it is a Teacher, Educational Assistant, Child and Youth Counsellor, Social Worker, Office Staff, Custodian, Principal, Vice-Principal, Parent or Guardian, Aunt or Uncle, or some other significant adult in the youth's life. These individuals play a significant role in encouraging and supporting students to access the programs and services needed in order to be successful. To you, we say thank you. To the student recipients, as you move forward, please remember the importance to continue to advocate for yourselves as you transition to high school or to post secondary,

to ensure that you have what you need to continue on your road to success. You have often heard people say to you to follow your passion, but before you do that, you have to find it. That's not always easy to do, but the traits that led you here this evening, determination and hard work are the same traits that will lead you towards finding and following your passion. Finally, I would ask that you take a moment tonight to thank those people in your life who have supported you along your journey.

Student Success Lead Zen thanked Vice-Principal Secondary Remote School McDowell and stated that Melissa McDowell, a stronger supporter of student success you will not find. Thanks were also expressed to Cathy Hill for organizing this event and to Trustee MacNeil for her opening comments.

Trustees expressed thanks to the students for their hard work as well as to the people involved in the presentations this evening.

Report from Student Trustees

Student Trustee Kim Tran expressed sincerest condolences to all of the Indigenous families suffering a loss of a loved one, recent or in the past. Although neither student Trustee identify as a member of an Indigenous group, they felt a great sense of loss and sadness and reflected on the despicable actions undertaken within the residential school system.

At the May 18th student senate meeting, guest speaker Colinda Clyne shared First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education in the Upper Grand DSB and outlined the Board's action plan to support teachers, administrators and students with their understanding of Indigenous issues.

Both Student Trustees had the opportunity to meet the new Director Designate Peter Sovran. The final meeting of the Student Senate for this year was scheduled for the 15th of June, 2021.

Student Trustees expressed thanks to all the Trustees and Staff for their support and appreciation for their experiences as Student Trustees.

On behalf of all Trustees, Trustee Topping wished Taran and Kim best wishes in their future endeavors.

Recommendation # 1

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

The motion carried.

Equity – Final Report

Superintendent of Education Van Ooteghem took a moment to celebrate the first day of Pride Month 2021. She reported that, today, the Upper Grand DSB proudly raised the Pride Flag at Board sites and schools throughout the district. Trustees were invited to watch the Board Office flag raising ceremony which was posted on the Board website, and listen to the voices of those who spoke, especially the three students who courageously and openly shared their stories. Sincere thanks were expressed to all participants.

Superintendent of Education VanOoteghem reminded Trustees that, a year ago today, the Board posted the following anti-racism statement, and approved a three year Equity Plan.

“As an educational community we have a responsibility to identify and describe racism and then work to dismantle it. The Upper Grand DSB is committed to disrupting systemic racism and oppression in all of its forms. We will implement ongoing mandatory anti-racism and anti-oppression training for all staff, review our protocols and policies, including our hiring practices, and be fully transparent and accountable to all Upper Grand students, staff, families, and stakeholders in an ongoing manner.”

Many actions, much work, and many staff have made this statement a reality in the Upper Grand DSB. The anti-racism statement is far more than just a group of words or statements. A number of staff elaborated on how the anti-racism statement went from just words to implementation of change, in many areas. Thanks were expressed to all who presented tonight, both in person and virtually, for highlighting, believing, and living, that equity, anti-racism, and anti-colonialism work belongs to each and everyone of us. A very in-depth presentation followed highlighting the scope of work done in this area, over the past year and outlined plans for moving forward to continue with the implementation of the Equity Plan.

Actions, strategies, progress to December 2020 and progress to June 2021, were highlighted in the areas of:

1. Identify and Name Bias, Oppression and Racism through reflection, evidence, voice/feedback and data.

2. Build collaborative relationships to foster community and alignment
3. Address and educate with accountable policies and practices
4. Eliminate bias, oppression and racism through disruption and action

Trustees expressed thanks for the report and for all the work done in the implementation of the Equity Plan.

Recommendation # 2

Trustee Bailey moved that the year-end Progress Report of the Upper Grand DSB Three-Year Equity Plan be received, with thanks.

The motion carried.

Mental Health Update

Mental Health and Addiction Lead Jenny Marino shared highlights from the 2020-21 Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan which contained four strategic plan pillars: Staff Mental Health Awareness and Literacy; Student Mental Health Awareness and Literacy; Mentally Healthy, Resilient and Safe Communities, and Youth, and Family and Community Engagement. In support of these pillars, information was shared on return to school, monthly wellness themes, student pathways, accessible teacher resources, the Umbrella Project, presentations, community collaboration, and the parent website. In preparation for the next, year, the Mental Health Leadership Committee will begin analyzing data and identifying needs and gaps in order to develop the 2022-25 Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan.

Recommendation # 3

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

The motion carried.

Summer Programs and Supports

Principal of Program, Jonathan Walker, Mental Health and Addiction Lead, Jenny Marino, and Assistant to the Superintendent of Program, Wendy Donaldson collectively presented the report entitled Summer Programming and Transitional Supports dated June 2021. Summer virtual curriculum supports include: in-school supports, summer elementary programs, grades 6, 7, and 8, literacy and numeracy courses, and grade 8

reach ahead course. Summer virtual secondary curriculum programming include: E-learning credits, grade 9 – 12 new credits summer school, upgrading credits through summer school, regular and skilled trades summer school co-op program, and summer school dual credit program. Virtual supports also include summer ESL, Special Education, and spring and summer special education transition supports. The fall transition supports, multi-disciplinary teams include supports for student requiring clinical and/or specialized supports. Mental Health programs include stress busters for students aged 8 – 12, skill building for secondary, suicide prevention training, equity and wellness, parent skill building, parent support/connection, phone line, and mental health and assessment supports.

Recommendation # 4

Trustee Bailey moved that the Summer Programs and Supports presentation be received, with thanks.

The motion carried.

Other Reports

OPSBA Report – nil report

Other Business -nil report

Adjournment

Trustee Foley moved that this Committee adjourn at 9:02 p.m. to report to the Board.

The motion carried.

This document is available in alternate formats upon request.