

Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 30, 2024
Boardroom and Microsoft Teams

Trustees: Ralf Mesenbrink (Chair), Katherine Hauser (Vice Chair), Jen Edwards, Irene Hanenberg, Alethia O’Hara-Stephenson, Martha MacNeil, Robin Ross, Lynn Topping, Luke Weiler, Laurie Whyte, Brooke Hartley (Student Trustee), Paige Knight (Student Trustee)

Administration: Director of Education Sovran, Executive Superintendent of School Services McDonald, Executive Superintendent of Business Services Regier, Superintendent of People, Leadership and Culture Pyke, Superintendents of Education Blair, Donaldson, Hamilton, Heaslip, and Taha, Human Rights and Equity Advisor Ralph, Communications and Public Relations Manager Loney, Manager - Trustee Secretariat Vorkapic

The regular monthly meeting of the Upper Grand District School Board was held virtually and in person on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, in the Board Room at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, starting at 7:02 p.m.

1. Meeting Called to Order

Board Chair Mesenbrink presided and called the meeting to order.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Trustee O’Hara-Stephenson recognized that the Board is meeting on the ancestral, treaty and title lands of two Anishinaabek Ojibwe Nations: The Michi Saagig of the Credit and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

Equity and Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Commitment Statement

Student Trustee Paige Knight highlighted the Board’s commitment to equity and anti-racism/anti-oppression.

3. Approval of the Agenda

RESOLUTION #24-34:

Moved by: Trustee Hauser
Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the agenda of the January 30, 2024 meeting as printed.

Carried

4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

5. Confirmation of Minutes of the Board

5.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Board Meeting Held January 16, 2024

RESOLUTION #24-35:

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil
Seconded by: Trustee Edwards

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the minutes of the January 16, 2024 meeting of the board.

Carried

6. Student and Staff Recognition

Director of Education Sovran provided some highlights and good news items that took place across Upper Grand DSB.

Upper Grand Students Compete in Provincial Weightlifting Competition

On December 9th, eight students from various elementary and secondary schools across the Upper Grand competed at the Ontario Youth Weightlifting Championships held in Toronto. For many of these young athletes, this was a first-time event, and many of them medaled amongst Ontario's best. Medals were won by Paige, Ryan, Jahala, Isla, Zoe, Graeme, and Megan. The students' participation in the

championships highlights the growing interest and involvement in weightlifting among the youth in the Upper Grand area.

Students Unite for Special Olympics Basketball

This December, 28 teams from seven Upper Grand schools attended the 2023 Special Olympics Guelph Basketball Qualifier tournament at Centre Wellington DHS. The event hosted over 140 athletes from the area who played on five different courts. The gym at Centre Wellington DHS was abuzz with excitement all day. Teams included Upper Grand Special Olympic Athletes and their Unified Partners.

June Avenue PS Gives Back this Holiday Season While Promoting Sustainability

Inspired by other Upper Grand elementary schools, June Avenue PS's Helping Hands Club decided to host an event this year to raise money for the Guelph Food Bank, while promoting sustainability in their community. This student led initiative involved students planning a holiday market at their school, and the Helping Hands Club advertised for gently used items to be donated. The items were available in the market and every item purchased for a relatively small amount. Students and staff were all invited to the learning commons where the market was set up in sections just like a retail store.

Former Students Visit Centennial CVI to Share their Life after High School Experiences

The Academic Council at Centennial CVI presented their post-grad forum to students. This event sees graduates from the school come back to talk to current students about their post-high school educational experiences. Students who came back to the school had backgrounds in engineering, math, computer science, chemistry, biology, medicine, nursing, business, and a variety of trades. During the event they spoke to small groups of students who were interested in learning more about these subject areas and the various paths. This outreach program has been running at Centennial CVI for 10 years and allows high school students a chance to hear first-hand about opportunities that may interest them.

Alma PS Experiment Chosen for Student Spaceflight Experiments Program

Alma PS had some exciting news. After submitting an experiment proposal to NASA's Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP), the school learned that their experiment was chosen to be the Upper Grand DSB's selection. Alma PS's experiment is now set to be part of the International Space Station's upcoming mission scheduled for launch in the spring of 2024. This achievement is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and scientific prowess demonstrated by Alma PS and all the Upper Grand DSB schools involved.

- 7. **Delegation(s) - Nil**
- 8. **Response to Delegation(s)**
- 9. **Committee Reports**

9.1 Committee of The Whole – Closed

Pursuant to Section 207(2) of the *Education Act* a meeting of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole, may be closed to the public when the subject-matter under consideration involves matters set out in 207(2)(a)-(e) of the *Education Act*.

Vice Chair Hauser presented the Committee of the Whole (Closed Session) report held on January 30, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM and was held in closed session as per Section 207 (2) of the Education Act. All board members were present and there were no declarations of conflict of interest.

RESOLUTION #24-36:

Moved by: Trustee Whyte
Seconded by: Trustee MacNeil

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the business of the Committee of the Whole - Closed Session of January 30, 2024.

Carried

9.2 Standing Committee

a) Policy and Priorities Committee – January 9, 2024

The Policy and Priorities Committee held a hybrid meeting on Jan 9, 2024. Chair Ross presided the meeting and there were no conflicts of interest.

RESOLUTION #24-37:

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil
Seconded by: Trustee Hauser

THAT the Upper Grand DSB approves the Policy and Priorities Committee report of January 9, 2024 including the following recommendations:

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board approve revised Policy 317 – Student Fees effective September 1, 2024; and

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board approve the Policy Development Plan for Celebrations and Commemorations; and

THAT the Upper Grand District School Board approve Policy 519 – First Nation, Métis, Inuit Self-Identification and Education. THAT the Upper Grand District School Board rescind Policy 500 – First Nation, Métis, Inuit Self-Identification.

Carried

9.3 Advisory Committee

a) Special Education Advisory Committee – January 10, 2024

The Special Education Advisory Committee held a hybrid meeting on January 10, 2024, and Acting Chair Wyshniowsky presided the meeting. Chair Whyte presented the SEAC Report and highlighted the following items: a presentation on the role of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor at Upper Grand DSB; a presentation about Inclusion Action in Ontario (IAO), a non-profit organization dedicated to the inclusion of students with disabilities in education and the community; an accommodation presentation where the CNIB Clear Print Accessibility Guidelines were shared; and a presentation on Project SEARCH which is a new program aimed at students with disabilities in both the Upper Grand DSB and the Wellington Catholic DSB set to begin in September 24, 2024.

RESOLUTION #24-38:

Moved by: Trustee Hanenberg

Seconded by: Trustee MacNeil

THAT the Upper Grand DSB receives the Special Education Advisory Committee Report of January 10, 2024.

Carried

9.4 Student Trustees

a) Student Trustees and Student Senate Report – December 19, 2023 and January 16, 2024

Student Trustees Brooke Hartley and Paige Knight presented the Student Trustees and Student Senate report. Key highlights included: an update on the use of AI; a Mental Moment from Upper Grand DSB Mental Health Lead Jenny Marino; an opportunity for students to work with the Mental Health Leadership Committee; increasing awareness of school-based programs and

personnel supports for students; information from the Well-being Health and Youth (WHY) survey collected; the process for the Student Trustee election and the role of a Student Trustee; and Student Senate feedback.

RESOLUTION #24-39:

Moved by: Trustee Edwards

Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the Upper Grand DSB receives the Student Trustees and Student Senate report of January 2024.

Carried

10. Report from Chair

Chair Mesenbrink acknowledged that the end of final assessments for secondary school students are approaching and wished everyone all the best with new challenges and opportunities, as semester 2 soon begins.

Chair Mesenbrink highlighted that February is designated in Canada as Black History Month and shared that at the Upper Grand DSB, as part of Upper Grand's core commitment to fostering an inclusive and diverse educational environment, the Upper Grand DSB is naming it Black Heritage, Black Brilliance, and Black Joy Month. This name not only commemorates the struggles and triumphs of the black community, but also highlights the brilliance and joy that permeates through the rich heritage. He briefly expanded on each part of the name and encouraged everyone to participate in the various activities and initiatives planned for the month of February.

Chair Mesenbrink mentioned that several trustees attended the Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA) annual conference the Public Education Symposium in Toronto last week. He noted the symposium was an excellent opportunity to participate in professional learning aimed at the trustee role featuring speakers on varied topics such as collective bargaining, human rights, equity and the trustee role, the impact and need for school food programs, effective community engagement and others. It was also an important opportunity to network with trustees from across the province and to learn about how problems are solved.

Chair Mesenbrink asked that everyone take a silent moment to reflect with compassion and send strength to all those who have suffered loss in their personal lives, across all Upper Grand schools, and in the community.

11. Report from Director

Director of Education Sovran highlighted three items this evening. Director Sovran shared the excitement to be involved with Project SEARCH and expressed thanks to Superintendent Donaldson for initiating this work in the Upper Grand last year, and to Superintendent Blair for her expertise and passion with championing opportunities such as this so all students can find their path.

Director Sovran emphasized the significance of recognizing, celebrating, and elevating Black Heritage, Brilliance, and Joy within Upper Grand's educational community. Upper Grand's commitment to human rights and inclusivity is non-negotiable, ensuring that every student regardless of their background, can simply be, achieve, and flourish. Director Sovran voiced that we all collectively embrace the richness of black heritage. To celebrate the brilliance within each student and cultivate an environment where black joy is an inherent part of being educational journey.

Director Sovran noted as the month of January draws to a close, so does the second quarter of the 2023-24 school year. Secondary school students will be commencing their second semester next week and students in our elementary schools will be marking the midway point of the school year. Director Sovran thanked students, staff, and families for their continued efforts and wished everyone the very best for the next quarter term of learning.

12. Other Business - Nil**13. Correspondence – Nil****14. Information Items – Nil****15. Adjournment****RESOLUTION #24-40:**

Moved by: Trustee MacNeil

Seconded by: Trustee Whyte

THAT the Upper Grand DSB adjourns at 7:29 p.m.

Carried