

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES

of the Regular Board Meeting

Monday, May 29, 2023

PRESENT:

Members: In Person: F. Alexander, M. Barbieri, C. Cotton, E. Crowe, A. Grella, M. Iafrate, T. McNicol, A. Saggese, J. Wigston (left at 10:30 pm)
Student Trustees A. Peta-Dragos, J. James
Virtual: J. DiMeo

Administration: In Person: D. Scuglia, J. Sarna, R. Antunes, A. Arcadi, M. Brosens, D. Candido, J. Chiutsi, K. Elgharbawy, M. Farrell, M. Gray, T. Laliberte, C. McNeil, S. Morrow, L. Paonessa, T. Pechkovsky, L. Sawicky, S. Wright

Absent with Notice: All Present

Recording Officer: S. Greco

Presiding F. Alexander, Chair of the Board

2023:245 CALL TO ORDER / OPENING PRAYER

Chair of the Board, Frank Alexander welcomed everyone to the Regular Board Meeting and welcomed the Faith Ambassadors to lead the opening prayer at 7:42 pm. The Land Acknowledgement followed.

2023:246 ROLL CALL – All Present

2023:247 APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL:

Add: Student Trustee Motion: Motion to Fly the Progress Flag at the CEC (17d)

MOTION: Crowe/Wigston

THAT the new material be approved as presented.

- **MOTION CARRIED –**

2023:248 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Barbieri/Wigston

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

- **MOTION CARRIED –**

2023:249 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR CURRENT MEETING: NIL

2023:250 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL

2023:251 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

Regular Board Meeting of April 25, 2023
 Special Board Meeting of May 15, 2023
 Special Board Meeting of May 23, 2023

MOTION: Cotton/lafrate

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of April 25, 2023, Special Board Meeting of May 15, 2023 and Special Board Meeting of May 23, 2023, be approved as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –

Vice-Chair Maria lafrate provided an apology for a term she used at the April 25th, Regular Board Meeting and stated that she was sorry if she offended anyone.

2023:252 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL**2023:253 CHAIR'S REPORT / UPDATE / INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES:**

Frank Alexander, Chair of the Board provided his report in the May 29, 2023 Regular Board Agenda package. Topics included: Catholic Education Week, Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation, OCSTA Meeting and School Saint Feast Days.

2023:254 OCSTA / BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S UPDATE:

Trustee Jennifer Wigston, OCSTA Regional Director representing York Catholic District School Board included a copy of the Board Meeting Highlights OCSTA Board of Directors dated April 26, 2023. Trustee Wigston further stated that both YCDSB Student Trustees are featured prominently on the OCSTA website in the May 5, 2023 OCSTA Newswire. The Board of Trustees can access all presentations from the OCSTA AGM in the secure member's site.

Trustee Wigston thanked Board consultants, Nancy Davie and Francesca Sarcinella for being part of the writing team that supported the Catholic Education Week resources.

Trustee Wigston also advised that she would share all CCSTA presentations with the Board of Trustees once they are shared.

2023:255 DIRECTOR'S REPORT / UPDATE:

Director of Education, Domenic Scuglia provided his report in the May 29, 2023 Regular Board Agenda package. Topics included: Milestone Anniversaries, Junior Student Trustee, Yes I Can Awards Ceremony, Vaughan in Motion, Terry Fox Contributions, Cardinal Carter Relay for Life, EQAO Assessments, MMIWG Walk of Remembrance, ICE Adult Faith Formation Symposium, Women in Trades Symposium, ChangeMakers Conference, Area Oral Communications Competition, Whistleblower App Launch, Luke 4:18 Symposium, Video Message Denouncing the Harassment of 2SLGBTQIA+ Students, Twitter Breaks on Mental Health, 2023-24 School Year Calendar, May School Visits, Upcoming Events/Items.

2023:256 STUDENT TRUSTEES' REPORT:

Student Trustee Jonah James reported as follows:

"May was a very busy month. From April 27th to April 29th, Student Trustee Peta-Dragos and I had the honour of attending the OCSTA Annual General Meeting, alongside some YCDSB Trustees and superintendents. Student trustees from across the board had the opportunity to attend this prestigious gathering, and are truly grateful for being recognized and welcomed at this table. Catholic Student Trustees and Student Trustees have a strong and unique bond, and we are truly grateful for having a place and voice when it comes to Catholic Education in York and Ontario. It was amazing to have connected with Catholic trustees from across the province and look forward to the future of Catholic Education."

Among the many events and celebrations that occurred during the month of May, a very special event in terms of student leadership was YSCPC executive council elections. On May 18th, Talented high school student leaders from across came together to elect the YSCPC executive council for the 2023-2024 school year. Candidate students ran for the opportunity to take on one of the 5 positions up for grabs. We were all so impressed by all of the candidates, who have their outstanding leadership within their school community. At the end of the day, our YCDSB school communities elected an exceptional group of students. Your YSCPC executive council members for the 2023-2024 school year are:

President: Dabria Peta-Dragos

1st Vice-president: Erica Cordierro

2nd Vice President: Sabrina Scarano

Treasurer: Joseph Massarani

Secretary: Sabina Kim

Director of Community Relations: Thiviya Jeyapalan

Director of Communications: TBD

Student Trustees: Monica Galstyan & Jonah James

I am so excited about this executive team and look forward to the amazing things we'll accomplish together!

On Wednesday, May 17th, I had the honour of attending the first-ever, YCDSB Changemakers Summit at St. Elizabeth CHS. The event was headlined by an interview with Layla Saad, the author of "Me and White Supremacy", followed by group discussions on key issues including reconciliation, black racism, 2SLGBTQ+ issues, and newcomers to Canada. I was truly honored to have attended and to see the amazing discussion of students from across the board on how to better address these important issues within our school community. Huge thanks to Michelle Farrell, our Human Rights and Equity Advisor for organizing and hosting the event, as well as Amira Zamanifar from St. Maximilian Kolbe CHS for her amazing emceeing."

Student Trustee Anthea Peta-Dragos reported as follows:

"I would like to first of all, thank Mr. Scuglia for taking the time to attend the YSCPC meeting on March 20th to explain the way CBC Executives and student leader participants the position of the YCDSB in regards the previous Regular Board Meeting from February 28th. The students really appreciate the information that you provided and your time to answer their questions.

Over the past weeks, many reactions from the student body in support of the 2SLGBTQIA+ students within the YCDSB schools have occurred. An open letter was sent to the YCDSB Senior Administration and Board of Trustees, and a petition was started by a group of YCDSB students requesting that YCDSB create a safer, more welcoming and inclusive school environment for the 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

In this context, I will share with the Board of Trustees a statement issued by the OSTA-AECO President Aisha Mahmoud and the OSTA-AECO Catholic Board Council President Stephanie De Castro in support of the 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the YCDSB. Student Trustee James and I remain committed to represent the student voice at the board table and are looking forward to further discussions on this important topic."

2023:257 RECOGNITIONS / OUTSIDE PRESENTATIONS: NIL

2023:258 DELEGATIONS: NIL

2023:259 JOURNEY TOWARDS OUR VISION:

a) 2023-2024 Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP)

J. Sarna, Associate Director shared the 2023-2028 MYSP with a new Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Commitments. The final report will be presented at the June 20th Regular Board Meeting for Board approval.

b) 2023-24 Estimates – Preliminary Financial Position

C. McNeil, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board and K. Scanlon, Budget Manager presented the financial overview for the 2023-2024. Estimates. A summary of the overarching budget pressures, cost savings and investments was shared.

c) Using Census Data to Identify and Eliminate Barriers to Students Achieving Their Full Potential

M. McShine-Quao, YCDSB Educational Researcher, presented new information on the Student Census titled "Using Data to Eliminate Barriers to Students' Achieving Their Full Potential." An update was provided on the ten demographic categories on the Student Census, which were linked to student outcomes and experiences to aid in the identification and elimination of barriers that may hinder some students from reaching their full potential. The presentation highlighted disparities in outcomes that were consistently noted for race, gender, and disability and that these three social identities act in combination with one another to influence educational outcomes. The most concerning findings included the lower achievement of students from certain racialized groups, students with a disability and boys.

The Board of Trustees had the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. Vice-Chair lafrate asked that a report come to the August Board Meeting, on how we can help all students to address the gaps identified in the presentation.

Chair Frank Alexander stated that the data supported his experience that students face systemic anti-black racism and that the Board has failed to address these concerns with a comprehensive plan of action. He told the Director that he was holding him accountable.

2023:260 ACTION ITEM(S) (including Committee Reports):**a) APPROVAL OF REPORT NO. 2023:15 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Vice-Chair Maria lafrate presented, for approval, Report No. 2023:15 of the Committee of the Whole private session held on May 29, 2023.

(i) **DECLASSIFIED (Action Items for Approval): NIL**

(ii) **CLASSIFIED:**

MOTION: lafrate/Barbieri

THAT the confidential action items from the Private Session held May 29, 2023 be approved as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –

b) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2023:06 SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Committee Chair Jennifer Wigston presented, for receipt, Report No. 2023:06 of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on May 1, 2023.

MOTION: Wigston/lafrate

THAT the Report No. 2023:06 from the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on May 1, 2023 be received as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED –

c) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2023:02 JOINT BOARD CONSORTIUM

Board Chair, Frank Alexander presented, for receipt, Report No. 2023:02 of the Joint Board Consortium meeting held on May 10, 2023.

MOTION: Alexander/lafrate

THAT the Report No. 2023:02 from the Joint Board Consortium meeting held on May 10, 2023 be received as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED –

d) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2023:02 STUDENT SUCCESS & PATHWAYS COMMITTEE

Committee Chair, Angela Saggese presented, for receipt, Report No. 2023:02 of the Student Success & Pathways Committee meeting held on May 15, 2023.

MOTION: Saggese/Barbieri

THAT the Report No. 2023:02 from the Student Success & Pathways Committee meeting held on May 15, 2023 be received as presented.

- **MOTION CARRIED -**

e) TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT TO THE YCDSB INDIGENOUS EDUCATION CIRCLE

Director of Education, Domenic Scuglia presented for approval the Trustee Appointment to the YCDSB Indigenous Education Circle.

MOTION: Barbieri/Saggese

THAT the Board appoint Trustee Maria Iafrate to the Indigenous Education Circle Committee.

- **MOTION CARRIED -**

f) DISSOLUTION OF THE AD-HOC TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT COMMITTEE

Committee Vice-Chair, Maria Iafrate, presented for approval, the dissolution of the Ad-Hoc Trustee Code of Conduct Committee.

MOTION: Iafrate/Saggese

THAT the Ad-Hoc Trustee Code of Conduct Committee be dissolved effective immediately.

- **MOTION CARRIED -**

g) TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT TO THE YCDSB GENDER, SEXUALITY AND CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Director of Education, Domenic Scuglia presented for approval the Trustee Appointment to the YCDSB Gender, Sexuality and Catholic Education Committee.

MOTION: Iafrate/Barbieri

THAT the Board appoint Trustee Angela Saggese to the YCDSB Gender, Sexuality and Catholic Education Committee.

THAT the Terms of Reference be amended accordingly.

- **MOTION CARRIED -**

2023:261

DISCUSSION ITEM(S):**a) Beyond the 94th, YCDSB Imagining the 95th Call to Action Excursion**

D. Scuglia, Director of Education provided information regarding a unique opportunity, "Beyond the 94th: YCDSB Imagining the 95th Call to Action" to take twenty-two students and three chaperones to Saskatchewan, Saskatoon and Regina to partake in Calls to Action, bringing them closer to Truth and eventual Reconciliation. The congregation will also attend the CCSTA AGM. Students will be fully engaged and will develop a plan working with the Board's Indigenous Team on projects at their local schools for the 2023-24 school year, on Truth and Reconciliation.

The Board of Trustees had the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. The Student Trustees stated that reconciliation is very important to them and that by traveling to Saskatchewan, they would experience the speakers, and gain a greater understanding of truth and reconciliation. They would also be able to learn hands-on, face-to-face learning and see all historical places with their own eyes.

Some members of the Board expressed their concerns with the use of funds, and the Board Chair brought forward the following Motion:

MOTION: Alexander/DiMeo

THAT the Chair of the Board write a letter to the Minister of Education to send an Audit Team to the YCDSB to conduct an audit of the Board's finances.

- **MOTION CARRIED** -

b) Update from the YCDSB Gender, Sexuality and Catholic Education Committee

D. Scuglia, Director of Education provided the Board of Trustees with information about the ongoing work of the YCDSB Gender, Sexuality and Catholic Education Committee, which was established in March 2022 to provide system-level guidance. Recommendations from the two sub-committees were shared for the Board of Trustees' consideration.

The Student Trustees presented their motion which was sponsored by Trustee Crowe. The Student Trustees asked for a recorded vote.

STUDENT TRUSTEE MOTION: Motion to Fly the Progress Flag at the CEC

Whereas *as a Catholic learning community, we believe that God loves each and every one of us as his own children, and all students and community members are to be supported, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation;*

Whereas *the YCDSB is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation, have access to a safe, inclusive and equitable learning environment;*

Whereas *YCDSB students who are of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community have faced intense discrimination and continue to be disadvantaged in their education;*

Whereas *student and community members have continuously advocated for the YCDSB to fly the Progress Flag as a gesture of support for 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff and families;*

Whereas *the YCDSB Gender, Sexuality and Catholic Education Committee recommends that the YCDSB fly the Progress Flag during the month of June (as indicated in the May 29th report, Item 17a).*

MOTION: Crowe/Grella

THAT the YCDSB affirms its commitment to supports its students and community members who are a part of the 2LSGBTQIA+ community by flying the Progress Flag at the CEC during the month of June.

The Board of Trustees had the opportunity to express their views and reasons for how they would be voting.

Chair Alexander asked the Board of Trustees who was in favour of raising the Progress Flag.

In Favour: Cotton, Crowe, Grella, Cotton (plus Student Trustees Peta-Dragos and James)

Against: Alexander, Barbieri, DiMeo, Iafrate, Saggese, McNicol

- **MOTION DEFEATED** -

Trustee Jennifer Wigston left the meeting at 10:30 pm

A five-minute recess was taken.

Board Meeting resumed at 10:40 pm

c) TRUSTEE MOTION: Identification of Gifted Learners (E. Crowe)

Whereas *the PACE center at St. Paul CES in Newmarket is being closed due to low enrolment;*

Whereas *two new PACE centers are being added, one in Markham and a second center in Richmond Hill;*

Whereas *logically it makes no sense that one geographic quarter of the Board does not identify enough students to maintain an elementary gifted program whilst other geographic areas of the Board have higher concentration of identified Gifted Learners;*

Whereas *this calls into question whether or not the CCAT screening tool used by the Board, as a preliminary step to a psychological assessment, is bias-free and equitable.*

LET IT BE RESOLVED:

THAT a review of the current PACE screening process be undertaken from a Human Rights and Equity lens to ensure that the process is free of any social/economic/racial biases.

This Motion will be an Action Item at the June 20th Regular Board Meeting.

2023:262 INFORMATION ITEM(S):**a) Contingency Plan: Blessed Chiara Badano CES & St. Katharine Drexel CHS**

J. Chiutsi, Superintendent of Education provided a report that reviewed interim accommodation options that were considered as a result of the construction delay and consequential delayed opening of the Stouffville Multi-Use Facility (Blessed Chiara Badano CES & St. Katharine Drexel CHS). The the opening date is assumed to be February 2024. The Board of Trustees had the opportunity to ask questions for clarification. Administration is proceeding with Option 1.

b) 2023-2024 Regular Board Meetings

The 2023-2024 Regular Board Meeting dates were shared.

c) Policy 604 Child Care & Early Years, Extended Day, before and After School Programs Results of Parent Satisfaction Survey

D. Candido, Superintendent of Education: Exceptional Learners shared information related to the administration of the Parent Satisfaction Survey as defined in *Policy 604 Child Care & Early Years, Extended Day, Before and After School Programs*. The Parent Satisfaction Survey requested input in four areas: Child Care Programs, Staffing, Parents and Participation and Operations.

d) Policy 615 Educational Partnerships Report

D. Candido, Superintendent of Education: Exceptional Learners and A. Arcadi, Superintendent of Curriculum and Assessment provided a summary of the Level 2 and Level 3 facility partners.

e) Virtual School 2023-2024

J. Sarna, Associate Director provided information with regard to the status of the YCDSB Virtual School for the 2023-2024 school year. The relatively low number of requests for virtual schooling, combined with the fact that the Ministry of Education no longer requires or funds school boards to operate such, contributed to the decision that the YCDSB will not be offering a virtual school for the 2023-2024 school year. It was noted that in partnership with TCDSB, all of the current families seeking a continuation of virtual learning have been accommodated into the virtual school being offered by TCDSB.

f) TRUSTEE MOTION: Finding Transportation Efficiencies Thru School Bell Time Review (E. Crowe)

- Whereas** *in the report to the Joint Board Consortium dated December 2014, staff stated the following: "Savings can result from changing some existing school bell times. Changing bell times would ensure that school bus routes operate as efficiently as possible and would allow for the re-use of existing vehicles";*
- Whereas** *a process for School Bell Time Management was developed and presented to the Joint Board Consortium dated June 2015. It recommended that parents were notified no later than December for changes to be implemented the following September;*
- Whereas** *the implementation of the process was postponed indefinitely, ie never implemented, because Student Transportation Services wanted to implement new routing software which would make modeling easier;*
- Whereas** *the new transportation funding model did not adequately address the YCDSB transportation funding shortfall.*
- Whereas** *the Board has a deficit and other Boards have found significant savings by undertaking a system wide review. For example, Durham DSB and Durham Catholic DSB saved \$1.9M in 2017 and took 48 buses off the road after implementing a system-wide bell-time review. In 2022-23 they undertook a second study to find further savings since school demographics and riderships had changed.*

LET IT BE RESOLVED

THAT *Student Transportation Services undertake a bell time review to find transportation efficiencies with a report to come to the board for September 2024 implementation.*

Trustee Elizabeth Crowe asked that her Motion be added as a Discussion Item on the June 7th Special Board Meeting. This will allow staff the opportunity to receive questions in preparation for when the Motion will come for Action at the August/September Board meeting.

g) TRUSTEE MOTION: Motion to Enrich YCDSB Catholicity (F. Alexander)

Whereas *Christ is at the center of our Faith;*

Whereas *We are all one in Christ;*

Whereas *This oneness is intended to bring us all in unity and peace with one another;*

Whereas *Unity and peace have been severely fractured;*

Whereas *Unity and peace can only be found in the Prince of Peace;*

Whereas *Infusing the Prince of Peace in our lives and the life of our schools will bring us that peace.*

LET IT BE RESOLVED

THAT *the York Catholic District School Board adopt the Order of Daily Prayer and Recitations and Prayer before and after each class;*

THAT *the Policy on Prayer be amended to include Order of Daily Prayer and Recitations and Prayer before and after each class.*

This Motion will be added as a Discussion Item on the June 20, 2023 Board Agenda.

h) June Calendar

The calendar was shared.

2023:263 NOTICES OF MOTION: NIL

2023:264 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S) / REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

**2023:265 ADJOURNMENT: 10:55 PM
ON MOTION: lafrate/Saggese and CARRIED**

Secretary of the Board

Chair of the Board