

**York Catholic District School Board**  
**MINUTES**  
**STUDENT SUCCESS & PATHWAYS COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, November 13, 2024**

**Attending:**

**Trustee Committee Members:** (In Person) F. Alexander, A. Saggese  
(Virtual) M. Barbieri

**Other Trustees:** (In Person) M. Iafrate

**Absent with Notice:** J. DiMeo, A. Grella

**Administration:** A. Arcadi, J. De Faveri, J. Sarna, A. Battick

**Staff:** Marisa Benakis, Daniel LaGamba  
Cristine Mazzeo, Anthony Pasquini, Tim Laliberte , Joel Chiutsi  
Jennifer Powers

**Recording:** L. Coquim

**Presiding:** A.Saggese, Committee Chair

1. **OPENING PRAYER:** (The Land Acknowledgement was recited after the Prayer)
2. **ROLL CALL:** All present. Absent with notice - J. DiMeo, A. Grella
3. **APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL: NIL**
4. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**  
**THAT** the Student Success & Pathways Committee Agenda be approved as presented.  
**MOTION:** Alexander/ Barbieri  
**CARRIED**
5. **APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**  
**THAT** the Minutes of the Student Success & Pathways Committee Minutes held on May 13, 2024  
**MOTION:** Alexander/ Barbieri  
**CARRIED**
6. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL**
7. **OUTSIDE PRESENTATION(S): NIL**
8. **PRESENTATION(S):**  
**Curriculum Updates Presentations**  
Presented by Anthony Arcadi, Superintendent of Education: Curriculum and Assessment

## **A. Artificial Intelligence Update**

Superintendent Arcadi presented an overview of YCDSB's approach to integrating AI into education, highlighting the issuance of a September 2024 document that establishes ethical and privacy-focused guidelines based on Catholic values. Trustees were introduced to a new AI Parent Guide, which provides definitions and explains YCDSB's stance on generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Gemini, though no specific tools are endorsed. Emphasizing the balance between educational benefits and student protection, the guide outlines AI's alignment with curriculum goals, the importance of academic integrity, and expectations for responsible use. Additionally, AI's role in fostering critical thinking was discussed, with teachers encouraged to integrate AI in ways that enhance learning without diminishing student contributions.

Key topics covered included privacy guidelines, such as avoiding identifiable student data in AI platforms, and a Green-Yellow-Red framework for evaluating tool security. For students aged 13–17, parental consent is required for data-related AI activities, ensuring family involvement in privacy decisions. Trustees also reviewed YCDSB's stance on academic integrity, where AI use must complement, not replace, student work, with clear boundaries to avoid plagiarism. Resources like Google's "Guardian's Guide to AI" and an AI citation guide will be available to parents to support informed engagement with AI. Trustees expressed gratitude for the board's proactive approach, especially in providing transparent, supportive resources for families navigating AI in education.

Trustee Alexander inquired if the AI guidelines created by the curriculum align with ministry standards. Superintendent Arcadi confirmed they do.

Trustee Saggese raised concerns about ensuring AI doesn't replace the skill of researching resources. An example was provided that often students may not remember how to locate Scripture passages from a Bible, and instead use BibleGateway, an AI tool. Superintendent Arcadi assured that AI is a tool to complement, not replace, teachers or educators. Trustee Saggese inquired about the board's ability to create its own AI. Superintendent Arcadi confirmed they are exploring the development of an internal AI engine, using their documents to allow students to access only board-specific data.

## **B. STREAM Centres of Excellence**

Presented by Marisa Benakis - STREAM Consultant

The STREAM Centres of Excellence have had a significant impact, facilitating 315 workshops by the end of Term 1, engaging over 315 educators and nearly 8,000 students across all elementary schools. Workshops are redesigned to align more closely with curriculum goals and Catholic Social Teachings, tackling real-world issues like mental health, stewardship, and social justice using tools such as coding, robotics, and 3D design. The theme "Pilgrims of Hope" inspires students to approach challenges with creativity and optimism, while a focus on each monthly Saints connects STREAM learning with faith-based role models.

Parents and guardians are now included in data collection, with feedback showing positive impacts on student engagement and career readiness. Post-visit slideshows celebrate learning and are widely shared within school communities. STREAM Centres also support school-led, multi-day projects and offer professional development tied to new STEM-integrated curricula. Future initiatives include the "A Rover's Story" program, blending STREAM learning with the Catholic Social Teaching on Human Dignity, further emphasizing STREAM's role in fostering faith-driven, purposeful education.

Trustee Alexander expressed excitement about the groundbreaking initiatives and praised the 100% student involvement. He asked for an example of integrating geography. Consultant Benakis explained they would align global issues with geography.

Trustee lafrate expressed enthusiasm for STREAM and asked about the feedback from grade 7 and 8 students. Consultant Benakis explained that these students initially wanted more leadership roles, so schools were given the flexibility to explore STREAM in ways that suited them. Benakis also noted that they receive many inquiries from other boards and actively share their work to support equitable opportunities for all students.

### **C. Continuing Education: Travel for Credit Programs**

Presented by Anthony Pasquini - Principal of Continuing Education

The International Language program has expanded to include IGBO (Nigerian Language), following a parent's request and high demand, with the parent helping secure an instructor. The program now operates across eight sites and offers a virtual option. Additionally, an elementary band program was introduced at St. Elizabeth CHS, with performances scheduled for Christmas and Spring.

Fall Night School credit programs remain popular due to advertising, innovative teachers, and robust offerings, though Saturday International Language courses saw a decline, possibly due to the March Break Travel for Credit program. There has been a significant increase in after-school remedial programs for Grades 9 and 10, focusing on EQAO and OSSLT preparation. These programs are highly funded by the Ministry of Education and are now streamlined through a central registration platform.

Trustee Alexander found the presentation engaging and advised them to consider natural disasters when focusing on Spain. Trustee lafrate expressed excitement for the students, while Trustee Saggese noted that feedback from previous programs highlights their success and encourages student participation.

### **9. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS:**

Superintendent Arcadi provided an update on a letter sent to the Ministry requesting the continuation of the de-streaming teacher support. The Ministry has not yet responded.

### **11. NOTICE OF MOTION:**

### **12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S): NIL**

### **13. NEXT MEETING DATE: To be Announced**

### **14. ADJOURNMENT: 2:53 pm ON MOTION: Alexander/ lafrate CARRIED**