

York Catholic District School Board
MINUTES
STUDENT SUCCESS & PATHWAYS COMMITTEE
Monday, December 04 , 2023

Attending:

Trustee Committee Members: F. Alexander, M. Barbieri, J. DiMeo, A. Grella, A. Saggese

Other Trustees: E. Crowe, M. Iafrate, J. Wigston

Absent with Notice: J. DiMeo

Administration: A. Arcadi, J. Sarna, D. Scuglia

Recording: L. Coquim

Presiding: A.Saggese, Committee Chair

1. **OPENING PRAYER:** (The Land Acknowledgement was recited after the Prayer)
2. **ROLL CALL:** All Present
3. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2023-2024:**
Chair: A. Saggese
Vice Chair: M. Barbieri

PRESIDING: Angela Saggese, Committee Chair called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

4. **REVIEW OF THE 2024 TERMS OF REFERENCE:**
THAT the 2024 Terms of Reference for the Student Success & Pathways Committee be approved
MOTION: Barbieri/
CARRIED
5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
THAT the Student Success & Pathways Committee Agenda be approved as presented.
MOTION: Grella/ Barbieri
CARRIED
6. **APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**
THAT the Minutes of the Student Success & Pathways Committee Minutes held on May 15, 2023, & October 26, 2023, be approved as presented.
MOTION: Alexander/ Barbieri
CARRIED
7. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM the MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL**

8. PRESENTATION(S):

Curriculum Updates Presentations

Presented by Anthony Arcadi, Superintendent of Education: Curriculum and Assessment

a. FSL Updates - presented by Tanya Giovinazzo, FSL/ FI Consultant

The Curriculum Department is offering DELF Proficiency Exams for FSL students in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Last year, 97% of participants received diplomas. This year's exams will be in May, with three levels available.

DELF exams serve as official proof of language skills, recognized internationally and by the Canadian government. Trained teachers facilitate the exams, enhancing language goals for students.

The Curriculum Department introduces three digital tools to enhance French proficiency, including Smash Education for vocabulary and language structure acquisition, Mary Glasgow Magazines for fluency, and "Jusqu'au bout" to support DELF exam preparation.

Teacher training for early literacy in French Immersion emphasizes evidence-based reading approaches. The focus includes decoding, spelling, and reading words in stories. The department provides phonics resources and decodable books, with 14 teachers attending an AIM language learning in-service.

French Immersion schools hosted information meetings in November for parents interested in applying for the FI program for their child. The evening is intended to promote the program and feature the French as a second language consultant.

Trustee lafrate inquired about the duration of DELF's existence and how students are informed of the exam. Regarding JAB, is it considered a recommended part of exam preparation, ensuring students are adequately prepared for the DELF exam?

Consultant Giovinazzo explained DELF, part of YCDSB since 2018, paused in 2020-2021 due to the pandemic but restarted in 2022. Department heads learn about it in subject council meetings. System memos reach guidance counsellors, and promotional activities include posters and French teachers. A student-friendly website is being developed for application details, exam preparation, and procedures.

The JAB (Jusqu'au Bout) resource is an instructional tool designed for teachers, rooted in the Common European Framework (CEFR) upon which DELF is based. The CEFR framework is integrated into our FSL curriculum, serving as a guide for language learning and teaching. This program is aimed at enhancing student proficiency and is aligned with the various levels of the DELF exam. It has been distributed to every secondary school in our system, and we strongly encourage teachers to incorporate it into their classrooms.

Superintendent Arcadi added that YCDSB French teachers are eager to inform students about the valuable DELF opportunity. This designation is highly sought after and provides a significant advantage in career choices. Recognized globally by major corporations and the federal government, the DELF has a positive impact on our system, helping retain students in their French studies and enhancing job opportunities.

b. Tech-Enabled Learning Updates - presented by Chris Reda, Paul Palma & Angela Carone

Tech-Enabled Learning Resource Website: The YCDSB's curriculum department maintains the Tech-Enabled Learning Resource website for educators, offering ongoing updates and resources. Staff can access it through the YCDSB Apps bookmark, as demonstrated by Consultant Reda during the meeting.

3D Printer Borrowing Program: YCDSB's 3D printer borrowing program allows schools to borrow Dremel 3D printers for three-week periods without rental fees. Six printers are available, and teachers can request them for projects aligned with the curriculum. Initiated in 2018-2019, the program has seen positive feedback, involving 75 projects, 128 teachers, and 6,800 students.

Digital Licenses for Educational Pursuits:

YCDSB recently secured diverse digital licenses to support both students and teachers. Consultant Palma detailed the available virtual learning environments (VLEs), highlighting their unique features to enhance the learning experience.

Trustees' Engagement with VLE:

Trustees engaged in a hands-on exercise to experience the benefits of virtual learning environments. Superintendent Arcadi, Director Suglia, and Trustee Chair Saggese expressed appreciation for the interactive tools acquired by YCDSB.

D2L VLE Platform Overview:

Consultant Carone presented the D2L VLE platform's support for daily tasks and assignments, with teachers accessing Ministry/CVO curriculum content. Additionally, 38 new Catholic-infused courses were introduced for the 2023-24 academic year.

eLearning Program Expansion:

YCDSB's eLearn program, presented by Consultant Palma, has expanded to 130 sections for 2023-2024, meeting increased demand. Currently, around 3200 students are enrolled, including both YCDSB and out-of-board students.

In-Service Training Importance:

Trustee Saggese emphasized the importance of in-service training, particularly for transitional years. Consultant Carone confirmed that the Tech-Enabled Learning Team actively supports teachers through school visits since September.

Google Classroom vs. D2L Choice:

Trustee Iafrate questioned the choice between Google Classroom and D2L. Consultant Palma clarified that Google Classroom is preferred in elementary schools, aligning better with students' needs. D2L considered more advanced, is used in the secondary panel to address those students' requirements.

c. Continuing Education Updates - presented by Anthony Pasquini

During the Continuing Education Updates presented by Principal Anthony Pasquini, new and innovative programs were highlighted, featuring enriched international languages programs with Japanese and Armenian, expanded tutoring for Grades 1-6 in General Interest programming, and a partnership with STEM Minds for technology and coding programs on Saturdays. A comparison of enrollment figures between fall 2022 and 2023 across various programs, including International Languages, General Interest, Grade 7 & 8 Remedial, Adult Conversation, and secondary programs, revealed a slight increase in enrollment for both elementary and secondary levels. Principal Pasquini provided a comprehensive summary of the new initiatives, including After-School Remedial Literacy and Numeracy for grades 9 and 10, Aquatics Courses

with 17 students earning credit and accreditation, and Travel For Credit - Summer School offering destinations such as Ottawa, Montreal, New York City, Vancouver, and Italy, with approximately 140 registrations for Grade 12 English and Visual Arts in Italy in July 2024.

Trustee lafrate asked about online availability for secondary international language classes. Principal Pasquini clarified that these classes have been consistently conducted remotely over the past three years, aligning with the student's preferred method of learning.

Chair Saggese asked about the slight decrease in the elementary languages program for fall 2023 and sought clarification on whether that decrease was attributed to remote or in-person attendance. Principal Pasquini confirmed that the number of sites for in-person classes decreased from 11 to 6 as a cost-cutting measure to reduce secretarial and custodial costs. This change resulted in an overall increase in the average number of students in each language class. Superintendent Arcadi also elaborated that the decrease in sites increased the increase in class sizes and overall was a cost savings initiative.

Trustee lafrate inquired about the number of languages offered in the secondary panel. Principal Pasquini confirmed that approximately 15 languages were currently offered. Superintendent Arcadi added that introducing a new language is feasible if there is community interest, an available instructor, and a sufficient number of students to run the class.

d. Social Studies and CWS Updates: presented by Superintendent Anthony Arcadi

The Ministry of Education has mandated an update to the grade 10 Canadian World Studies course, requiring the inclusion of education on the Holodomor famine in Ukraine. This course modification is scheduled to be implemented in September 2025.

The Ministry has increased sensitivity to community issues. In response, the Social Studies curriculum for Grades 1 to 3 has been revised to include new expectations for Indigenous education, per System Memo C:013, addressed during the October 20th professional development day. Additionally, the Social Studies curriculum for Grade 6 has been updated with new Holocaust education expectations outlined in System Memo C:007, also discussed on the October 20th professional development day.

Trustee lafrate and Chair Saggese expressed satisfaction with the Ministry's initiative to combat systemic racism and their commitment to educating students about history.

9. ACTION ITEMS: Nil

10. DISCUSSION / INFORMATION ITEMS:

Superintendent Arcadi provided an update on the information items for discussion. Principal Pimentel has completed tasks, such as promoting Family Life Lead through social media, inviting Trustees to Faith Ambassador Events, and enhancing student participation in the Reconciliation Mass.

Purchasing UFLI manuals for each teacher wasn't feasible due to the organization's policy against bulk purchases. The foundation, operating on a limited budget, channels funds back into resources.

EQA/OSSLT results by school and by trustee are being obtained and will be shared soon.

Comparing enrollment in trades with other boards is part of an exit survey for grade 12 students.

11. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL
12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S): NIL
13. NEXT MEETING DATE: February 5, 2024
14. ADJOURNMENT: 7:57 pm
ON MOTION: Barbieri/ Alexander
CARRIED