

PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of a Board Meeting of the Peel District School Board, held on Wednesday, October 23, 2024, at 19:00 hours. The hybrid meeting was held in the Board Room, the H. J. A. Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga, Ontario, and by electronic means.

Members present:

David Green, Chair	Jeffrey Clark
Satpaul Singh Johal, Vice-Chair	Will Davies
Lucas Alves	Brad MacDonald
Karla Bailey	Kathy McDonald
Susan Benjamin	Jill Promoli
Stan Cameron	

Member absent (apologies received):

LeeAnn Cole

Student Trustees:

Pradwit Thapa, Student Trustee North
Justin Ko, Student Trustee South
Austin Chrisjohn, Indigenous Student Trustee

Administration:

Rashmi Swarup, Director of Education
Paul da Silva, Associate Director, School Improvement and Equity
Camille Logan, Associate Director, School Improvement and Equity
Alvin Au, Acting Superintendent of Education
Craig Caslick, Superintendent of Education
Lara Chebaro, Superintendent, Curriculum and School Improvement
Yonnette Dey, Superintendent of Education
Wendy Dobson, Acting Controller, Corporate Support Services
Donna Ford, Superintendent of Education
Soni Gill, Superintendent of Education
Atheia Grant, Acting Superintendent of Equity, Indigenous Education and Community Engagement
Leslie Grant, Superintendent of Education
Rasulan Hoppie, Superintendent of Education
Masuma Khangura, Executive Officer, Human Resources, Partnerships and Equity
Lisa Leoni, Superintendent, Leadership, Development and School Partnerships
Luke Mahoney, Superintendent of Education
Mark Marshall, Acting Chief Information Officer, Learning Technology Support Services
Neerja Punjabi, Superintendent of Education
Claudine Scuccato, Superintendent Special Education

Administration: (Continued)

Michelle Stubbings, Superintendent, Safety and Well-Being
Mathew Thomas, Controller, Planning and Accommodation Support Services
Thomas Tsung, Controller, Facilities and Environmental Support Services
Jasmine Vorkapic, Governance Officer
Kervin White, Superintendent of Education

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. Call to Order

Chair David Green called the meeting to order at 19:00 hours.

2. National Anthem and Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

A video of the singing of the National Anthem and reciting of the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands was viewed.

3. Approval of Agenda

Resolution No. 24-221 moved by Jill Promoli
seconded by Stan Cameron

Resolved, that the agenda be approved.

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4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

5. Staff Recognition: Retirements

Vice-Chair Satpaul Singh Johal recognized the retiring staff for their hard work and dedication to Peel DSB. He wished them well in their retirement.

Resolution No. 24-222 moved by Jeffrey Clark
seconded by Karla Bailey

(continued overleaf)

5. Staff Recognition: Retirements (Continued)

Resolved, that the following retirements be received:

Hermano Andrade	Lillian Gleasure	Islay McCrae
Tony Belmonte	Kelly Graci	Jamie O'Donnell
Janette Brown	Kamiel Hill	Suzanne Stanley
Steven Burlock	Nikki Hutchison	Edwin Valladares
Keith Crocker	Isabel Kloucek	Monica Zekron
Sandra De La Roca	Aysha Mall	
Janet Giugovaz	Kiyomi Masaki	

..... carried

6. Board Chair's Announcement

Later in the meeting, Board Chair, David Green, reported that over the next few days Peel DSB will be submitting to the Ministry of Education the penultimate report responding to the Ministry Directives, and the final report is expected to be submitted in January 2025.

7. Director's Report

Director of Education, Rashmi Swarup, recalled the launch of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) at the start of this academic year. She highlighted activities related to the MYSP goals which included: updating the cell-phone policy to align with the Ministry of Education's guidelines; information nights for Black families on Regional Learning Choices and High Skills Programs; partnership with Toronto Raptors on an essay writing competition focused on Black students; professional learning sessions aimed at empowering Educational Assistants, special education staff and administrators. In addition, Peel DSB was invited to lead a series of webinars hosted by the Skills Development and Apprenticeship Branch of the Ministry of Education for participants from all Ontario school boards. A delegation of 15 educators and leaders from Wales visited the Board, and explored PDSB's innovative practices in STEM education, Indigenous learning, change management strategies, and approaches for developing future-ready skills. Land-based learning and team building was held at the Jack Smythe Field Centre for the Senior Team. Director Swarup reported on a Speaker Series planned on the Future of Healthcare, which is a joint initiative with Toronto Metropolitan University's School of Medicine and Faculty of Community Services, for middle and secondary students, on educational and pathway opportunities in healthcare.

Resolution No. 24-223 moved by Will Davies
seconded by Brad MacDonald

Resolved, that the Director's Report (oral), be received.

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8. Minutes of the Board Meeting, September 25, 2024

Resolution No. 24-224 moved by Karla Bailey
seconded by Lucas Alves

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Board Meeting, held September 25, 2024, be approved.

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9. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, September 17, 2024

Resolution No. 24-225 moved by Susan Benjamin
seconded by Lucas Alves

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, held September 17, 2024, be received.

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10. Minutes of the Parent Involvement Committee Meeting, September 19, 2024

Resolution No. 24-226 moved by Susan Benjamin
seconded by Jill Promoli

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Parent Involvement Committee Meeting, held September 19, 2024, be received.

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11. Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting, September 26, 2024

Resolution No. 24-227 moved by Will Davies
seconded by Stan Cameron

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Audit Committee, held September 26, 2024, be received.

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12. Minutes of the Physical Planning, Finance and Building Committee Meeting, October 8, 2024

Resolution No. 24-228 moved by Stan Cameron
seconded by Will Davies

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Physical Planning, Finance and Building Committee Meeting, held October 8, 2024, be received.

..... carried

13. Minutes of the Curriculum, Equity and Student Well-Being Committee Meeting, October 9, 2024

Resolution No. 24-229

moved by Susan Benjamin
seconded by Kathy McDonald

Resolved, that the Minutes of the Curriculum, Equity and Student Well-Being Committee Meeting, held October 9, 2024, be received.

..... carried

14. Multi-Year Strategic Plan: Progress Report 2.1 – Safety and Well-Being

Associate Director, School Improvement and Equity, Camille Logan, stated that this report provides an update on Peel DSB's work to reduce and eliminate disproportionalities in suspensions and expulsions of marginalized students and particularly for those who identify as African, Black, and Afro-Caribbean. The report is aligned with actions outlined in the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

Superintendent, Safety and Well-Being, Michelle Stubbings, advised that Peel DSB continues to prioritize the need to work towards improving racial inequities for students who identify as African, Black, and Afro-Caribbean, Indigenous, and Middle Eastern. She stated that Peel DSB suspension data has significantly decreased since pre-Covid and is among the lowest in the province. This can be attributed to the removal of arbitrary suspensions and a strong framework of administrative requirements, when considering a suspension. Michelle Stubbings explained that staff are mandated to work with educators and the administration to build staff capacity, cultivate relationships, and develop a sense of community, through use of intentional strategies designed to identify and eliminate biases, barriers, and power dynamics which limit equitable access of identifiable student groups. She highlighted programs and partnerships implemented: regular monitoring: suspension data analysis; updated professional learning for the bullying prevention and intervention plan; school climate; suspension data. Questions of clarification from trustees were responded to regarding the Education Act does not allow in-school suspensions, and suspension data fluctuates from month to month which may skew the percentages when the number of suspensions is low.

Resolution No. 24-230

moved by Jeffrey Clark
seconded by Satpaul Singh Johal

Resolved, that the Multi-Year Strategic Plan: Progress Report 2.1 – Safety and Well-Being, be received.

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15. Multi-Year Strategic Plan: Progress Report 2.2 – Special Education

Superintendent of Special Education, Claudine Scuccato advised that in partnership with OPSEU Local 2100, Professional Learning (PL) opportunities and a Conference were offered to Educational Assistants, educators, and school administrators at the start of this school year. She stated that the aim was to equip special education staff with essential skills and knowledge to ensure safety, personal care, and best practices for exceptional learners. She outlined the key features of the PL which included support for students with co-regulation, communication, and Applied Behaviour Analysis. The Conference highlights included: leadership; mentorship; collaboration in special education; roles, responsibilities and services of special programs staff; support for students with complex needs; Individual Education Plans; Special Equipment Allocation (SEA) claims. Next steps will include monitoring and accountability measures to assess the application of skills learned and ensure equity of access in classrooms.

Resolution No. 24-231

moved by Karla Bailey
seconded by Kathy McDonald

Resolved, that the oral report re Multi-Year Strategic Plan: Progress Report 2.2 – Special Education, be received.

..... carried

16. Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) In Action

Associate Director, School Improvement and Equity, Paul Da Silva, stated that the MYSP, developed in collaboration with the Board of Trustees and staff, serves as a guiding framework for advancing the Peel DSB. He described the core goals of student achievement, safety and well-being, equity and inclusion and community engagement, to ensure that every student benefits from an exceptional educational experience. Superintendent of Education, Leslie Grant, reported on schools in her Family of Schools. She highlighted a cross-panel initiative involving the Black Student Associations (BSA) of Mississauga Secondary School, David Leeder Middle School, and Meadowvale Village Public School through the Reading Buddies Program. She advised that students in the program supported younger Black students in improving reading skills, boosting confidence, and affirming identities. The program also enhances community engagement, leadership development, mentorship, educational equity, building positive relationships, and fostering a love of reading. Trustees speaking expressed appreciation for the report.

Resolution No. 24-232

moved by Susan Benjamin
seconded by Jill Promoli

Resolved, that the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) In Action, be received.

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17. Personal Mobile Device/Cell Phone Use in Schools Policy Implementation

Associate Director Logan stated that the report provides an update on the status of the implementation and impact of the Policy in schools since the start of the school year. Superintendent of Safety and Well-Being, Michelle Stubbings, referred to the Ministry of Education announcement of Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 128, Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct, addressing cell phone use and vaping in schools. She reported that since the implementation of this Policy in September 2024, elementary students are not to bring cell phones to school, and secondary students may use a personal cell phone during instructional time with explicit permission of the teacher. Michelle Stubbings advised that cell phone ban or restrictions were communicated to students and families in various formats. She shared data indicating that implementation of restrictions points to a significant improvement in student focus and attention.

Responses to questions of clarification from trustees included: data was collected through a survey to all stakeholders; some concerns expressed by secondary panel were similar to those of elementary; information on the cell phone restrictions was disseminated centrally as well as through schools. Regarding a query on the extent of teachers' reporting on outcome of the cell phone ban and restrictions, it was clarified that data indicated as 'not sure' would reflect cases where respondents to the survey may not be certain about observations made, and given that the ban was implemented recently, the data presented is for a short period of time. Chair Green expressed appreciation for the report.

Resolution No. 24-233

moved by Stan Cameron
seconded by Brad MacDonald

Resolved, that the report re Personal Mobile Device/Cell Phone Use in Schools Policy Implementation, be received.

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18. School/Staff/Student Successes

School, staff, and student successes were highlighted. Information was shared on: four Peel students from Darcel Avenue Public School became the first Canadian team, Forest Guardians, to win first place at the World Robot Olympiad Open Championship, Future Innovators Junior event in Italy, for their Blaze-Bot solution to stop the spread of wildfires; students of Sir William Gage Middle School and Central Peel Secondary School participated in the annual Central Peel Strings Extravaganza offering the opportunity to engage in workshops with guest artists; participation in the Terry Fox Run, Walk and Roll, to raise awareness and funds for cancer research. On October 22nd, Peel DSB launched the Emerging Racialized Leaders' Network, designed to support Black, Indigenous and other racialized staff committed to advancing their leadership within schools and the board to challenge inequities. Students, staff and trustees were joined by local politicians and community partners at Ellwood Memorial Public School to celebrate the second anniversary of the Caledon school vegetable garden project in summer, donating vegetables to the Caledon Community Services exchange hubs. The gardens are a hands-on learning opportunity for students, and ties into the Ontario Curriculum. The World of Welcome (WOW) program provides guidance to students through activities like games, performances, and mentorship.

19. Adjournment

Resolution No. 24-234

moved by Stan Cameron
seconded by Will Davies

Resolved, that the meeting adjourned (20:02 hours).

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..... Chair Secretary