

Approved Minutes
Meeting of the Black Community Advisory Council

Monday, December 5, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Co-Chair: Gord Gallimore
Co-Chair: Wayne Brunton

ATTENDEES:

Chris Shelton	Parent/Guardian
Horace Wright (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Candace Carter (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Ebenezer Addei	Parent/Guardian
Gord Gallimore	Parent/Guardian and Co-Chair
Lynn Busby (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Roxanne Smith (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Muna Said-Ahmed (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Dr. Brian Chama (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
(<i>TBD</i>)	Student Member
Sope Duyile (<i>Absent</i>)	Student Member
Alycia Williams-McSween (<i>Absent</i>)	Student Member
Trisha Johnson-White	Agencies – ResQ Youth International
Marcia Glasgow	Agencies – United Achievers’ Club
Jackie Maloney (<i>Absent</i>)	Agencies – Congress of Black Women
Michael Marshall (<i>Absent</i>)	Agencies – The Black Educators Association of DPCDSB
Jason Eduful (<i>Regrets</i>)	Agencies – The Black Educators Association of DPCDSB
Crystel Campbell (<i>Regrets</i>)	Agencies – Black Youth Student Success Initiative
Duke Nicholson	OECTA Representative – Elementary
Jamie Philip (<i>Regrets</i>)	OECTA Representative – Elementary
(<i>TBD</i>)	OECTA Representative – Secondary
Thompson Adiuku (<i>Absent</i>)	OECTA Representative – Secondary
Colin Daniel (<i>Regrets</i>)	Elementary Principal/Vice Principal Association
Lorian Feres	Secondary Principal/Vice Principal Association
Sophia Maloney (<i>Absent</i>)	Secondary Principal/Vice Principal Association
Sharise Sealy-McCallum (<i>Regrets</i>)	Graduation Coach for Black Student Success – DPCDSB
Marlo Paraboo (<i>Regrets</i>)	Graduation Coach for Black Student Success – DPCDSB
Dr. Carl James	Advisor – Professor, York University
Wayne Brunton	Staff – Superintendent, BNE Family of Schools and Co-Chair

Michelle Coutinho	Staff – Principal, Equitable and Inclusive Education
Nancy Cargioli	Staff – Acting Coordinator, Equitable and Inclusive Education
Jaclynn Deveaux-Matthews	Staff – Acting Consultant, Equitable and Inclusive Education
(TBD)	Staff – CIO Information Technology
Max Vecchiarino	Staff – Director’s Designate
Marianne Mazzorato	Director
David Amaral (<i>Regrets</i>)	Associate Director – Instructional Services
Margaret Beck (<i>Regrets</i>)	Legal Counsel
Caroline McFarland	Recorder

1. Opening Prayer

Jaclynn Deveaux-Matthews led the prayer.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Jaclynn Deveaux-Matthews played the recorded land acknowledgement read by a former Dufferin-Peel student, Rhaya Clyne.

3. Welcome, Introductions and Attendance

Nancy Cargioli called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Attendance

Attendance was taken and those who sent regrets were noted. Michelle Thompson, Principal of St. Joachim Elementary School, Shenelle Bernier, Acting Mental Health Liaison, Paula Callender, Coordinator of Well-Being and Safe and Inclusive Schools and Maz Jafferji, ICT Support, joined as guests.

4. Approval of the Agenda

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

Moved by Duke Nicholson

Seconded by Ebenezer Addei

5. Approval of the Minutes – October 3, 2022

The unapproved minutes of October 3, 2022 were distributed to BCAC members via e-mail.

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 3, 2022 MEETING BE APPROVED.

Moved by Duke Nicholson

Seconded by Ebenezer Addei

6. Information Items:

a. Census Data

Max Vecchiarino advised that the census data is ready to be shared with all councils starting in January. The data will then be disaggregated to start to develop some identity profiles. This will help schools respond to the needs of their students and staff.

b. Working Groups (Curriculum Resources, Goal Setting, Community and Family Engagement)

Nancy Cargioli advised that between October and December, the working groups met to discuss Curriculum Resources, Goal Setting and Community and Family Engagement.

Monique Napier shared that the Curriculum Resources working group meeting was focused around harmful language in the school space. There is a need for staff to have an equity lens and be able to identify harmful language when they enter learning spaces. Coaching and training need to be provided to help staff deal with students. It is important that students

know that there is a safe space where these discussions can take place, where educators can listen and hear their views. Before harmful language enters learning spaces through literature, text or learning about history, it is best to coach and have disclaimers that the class may be covering some information that may be sensitive to others and to give those students affected the opportunity to know that they can step away if needed. Also discussed were the processes before harmful text enters the classroom or curriculum and what can be done to ensure that these Board aligned lists comply and are in line with Catholic virtues and values. There is a booklist by parents of Black children where recommendations can continuously be made. These books can be reviewed to hopefully be added to the Board approved list of texts for schools. The group felt that it is important that the inclusion of Black history be incorporated throughout the year as part of the curriculum.

Looking at areas of STEM, having Black speakers would be valuable as these are spaces that are sometimes under represented. There is a strong presence that some may not be aware of and it would great for students to be exposed to those speakers within STEM. Hopefully students will be encouraged and influenced to explore these areas.

Max Vecchiarino clarified that the Board has been very explicit that an incident that involves a racial slur, racism or microaggression is always addressed and investigated. Depending on the specific circumstances, action is taken up to and including dealing with them at the highest level which would be to refer matters to the Employee Relations Department. It seems to be working as there is an increased number of incidents being reported and reviewed. Michelle Coutinho added that there is also an Online Reporting Tool on every school website that is active and being refreshed. This tool provides students an opportunity to report something anonymously to the school or Board based on their experiences. Wayne Brunton advised that regardless of what avenue the student takes to report the incident, it is reported usually to the principal and escalated. Any incidents such as this are also brought to Executive Council's attention.

A discussion ensued regarding information and resources shared with staff about harmful language and the changes to the Online Reporting Tool to assist students.

Gord Gallimore shared that the Goal Setting working group discussed requesting information around data as this would inform some of the goals. Since the student census is being released, what qualitative data does the Board have to center student voice and inform some of their goals. What are the accountability measures? Do trustees have the necessary training to dismantle Anti-Black Racism in the Board? This working group discussed professional development, accountability and applying pressure to OECTA and OCT to mandate training on Anti-Black Racism. The group wants to write a letter to the Director of Education, trustees and superintendents regarding Anti-Black Racism and asking how they are ensuring that training is tied to accountability and that identity based data and discipline measures are in place.

Nancy Cargioli shared that the Community and Family Engagement working group was interested in issues pertaining to Catholic School Councils and representation. How are we educating families racialized Black about Catholic School Councils? Is there a document in place or how can they share this information with parents at events? Members suggested education awareness and school council opportunities for Black parents to offer capacity building. The group discussed the possibility of bringing back Peel Safety Village as this appeared to them as potentially police presence in schools being repackaged and the group was collectively against this. On the basis of looking at police presence, it needs to make sense, it needs to be

intentional and it needs to be in consultation with Black community members. They discussed sending a letter to trustees regarding accountability and in support of banning police presence in schools. This working group would like to increase its participation to seek more feedback. They wanted a continuation of Catholic School Council informative pieces and they were interested in creating a list of Black lead community organizations and spaces to share with parents.

Dominique Darmanin-Sturgeon, Chair of the Central Committee for Catholic School Councils, advised that the Ministry has indicated that they would like the focus of parent engagement to continue to include education around equity and Indigenous education. Wayne Brunton added that when they were looking at the composite of Catholic School Councils, very few racialized parent members put their names forward to hold a position on their local Catholic School Council or even just attend meetings. As a result, they intentionally and purposefully have conversations with principals to engage with all members of their racialized communities to participate. The Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) represents all the schools in the Board. This year, eight of the fourteen parent representatives from Family of Schools who sit on CCCSC are racialized Black parents. This means that the work they are doing with the principals and the messaging going out to communities is reaching racialized communities to bring voice to the central Board table and local Catholic School Councils. The Ministry meets three times a year with the parent involvement committee leads, such as Dominique and Wayne, in all boards and they talk about focus and goal setting in school boards. The Ministry's goal has been and continues to be equity, inclusivity and Indigenous education and boards are provided funding for this purpose. This information is shared with the CCCSC and resources will be used ensuring that there will be one parent engagement on Anti-Black Racism and equity and one on Indigenous education and that resources are continually purchased for and distributed to parents.

c. Black Professionals Expo

Nancy Cargioli advised that the Black Professionals Expo took place in November. Two videos were shared from the Black Excellence Expo 2022.

Lorian Feres shared that testimonies were received in abundance from students, parents and community members about how well the event went and the connections that were made. Wayne Brunton was thanked for supporting this huge event where over 55 Black professionals came to talk to students and share their narrative to inspire students. This was about building a community where Black students can see themselves reflected in different industries, make connections and learn about scholarships.

Michelle Thompson added that an event this size takes a lot of work. They wanted to diversify the professionals that attended and were able to cover five categories which included education and health and sciences. This will be an annual event to build capacity in the Black community within Dufferin-Peel. When you network with other Black professionals, students, parents, educators and people from corporate in Dufferin-Peel in events like this, you start to spread the love. They have made connections with other professionals in Dufferin-Peel who want to meet to see how they can engage with students in Dufferin-Peel and help with planning of future events.

Lorian Feres also shared that there was an exit survey and an auction for a painting donated by a Black professional. The feedback from the exit survey was overwhelming and they hope to make the event bigger next year.

d. Catholic Equity Leads

Nancy Cargioli advised that the Catholic Equity Lead has been a standing role amongst educators within the Board for over five years and the purpose of the role is to support in building capacity using an anti-oppressive framework. The focus for the last two years has been to address Anti-Black Racism. Each school within DPCDSB has at least one lead. They are called to attend professional development workshops led through the Equity Department. The Program Department has been included this year as well as an invitation to other members. This year the workshops are led by Dr. Nicole West-Burns and the focus is a five part series on Racial Literacy and Addressing Anti-Black Racism. Two of the five workshops have been completed. The first one was titled What is Racial Literacy? How Might I Build Mine, the second was Confronting Anti-Black Racism, The N Word, Stereotypes and Dominant Narratives, the third is Curricular Violence, the fourth is Addressing Deficit Perspectives: Funds of Knowledge and Cultural Capital and the fifth is Cultivating Intellect for Black Students: Extending the Bounds of Relevance. Once the leads have completed the professional development, they bring it back to disseminate it within their school communities and lead initiatives. Following each session, members from the Equity Department will hold a follow up learning table series to support larger conversations on unpacking understandings from the workshops.

7. Mental Health and Well-Being Plan

Paula Callender and Shenelle Bernier work in the Well-Being Department under the leadership of Lucy Papaloni, Superintendent of Special Education and Learning Services. A PowerPoint on Student Mental Health and Well-Being in Dufferin-Peel was shared.

They work closely with an organization called School Mental Health Ontario, a provincial agency which supports school boards in implementing their mental health strategy. They use a tier model called Aligned & Integrated Model (AIM). The Well-Being Department focuses on tier one which is the Foundation tier where all staff in all schools are called to engage in everyday practices that welcomes students to school and creates really caring school environments. They partner with parents and caregivers so that each student experiences the supportive environment that is needed for them to succeed at school. Tier two has a focus on prevention and early intervention where staff notice they might need some supports reinforced or repeated. There may be work that is happening in classrooms or in small groups. Tier three are the supports for students who really need the more intensive and individual supports. Students may be referred to school based Support Services Personnel or any community based agencies.

The Student Mental Health and Well-Being Champions are a diverse group of secondary students representing each secondary school. They meet in the summer and have received training in mental health promotion, help seeking and Anti-Black Racism. They created resources by students for students. They also have an Instagram account 'dp.champions' where they share the resources for students. There information is also shared on the Well-Being Twitter account 'DPwellness4all' as well as on the staff SharePoint.

To ensure that families and caregivers are being reached, information is shared via the Well-Being Twitter account and a monthly family newsletters called Thrive in Community goes out to all staff and families/caregivers. They also worked with the Equity and Safe Schools departments in Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week and created resources for both secondary and elementary students with an equity focus.

Students are the center of the Well-Being departments work and a lot of it is based on feedback

from the student groups they interact with. They work with Anti-Black Racism Forums and connections to the Graduation Coaches for Black Students, Student Senate and 2SLGBTQ+ Allies Club and BSA's in Secondary Schools. They also just created a grant called the Elementary Well-Being Grant where students can form groups in which they try to spread mental health and well-being awareness in their schools. To receive the grant, they have to be equity focused, have help seeking resources, and show they were working with Support Services staff and educators. A Student Voice video was shared titled A Message from the 2022-2023 DPCDSB Student Mental Health and Well-Being Champions.

A discussion ensued.

Michelle Coutinho advised that every school has help seeking posters to inform students of the names of people in their school they could speak to if they needed someone to talk to. They have been placed in bathroom stalls to provide privacy for students.

8. Black History Month 2023

Jaclynn Deveaux-Matthews shared that this year in the Equitable and Inclusive Education Department, there has been an intentional focus on Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP). The department has worked to curate a collection of identity affirming texts for elementary schools. The work is to foster an understand of how educators can transform educational spaces into places that allow space for historically excluded systems of knowledge and invite in the many different ways of knowing and being that students bring into the classroom. As part of this work, they have reached out to the NIA Centre for the Arts who teach about the arts across the African diaspora. When we value and highlight the knowledge that children come to school with that come from their lived experiences, we prioritize the success of all students. In keeping with this goal, this year Black History Month will have an intentional focus on uplifting stories that invite us into new ways of knowing and being. In the elementary panel, they are planning to offer an author series that honours diverse ways of knowing and being by focusing on stories. The focus of this author series is to highlight the under told story and to offer a counter narrative. In the secondary panel, the focus will be the continuation of the Black Futures speaker series. The series will aim to build on the idea that stories can be used to empower and humanize. Speakers may potentially include Khodi Dill, Sarah Nurse and Arnold Pinnock.

9. Closing Remarks

Nancy Cargioli thanked everyone for joining and thanked the working groups who are coming out in addition to the larger group meetings. The next meeting will be February 6, 2023.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.