

Approved Minutes

Meeting of the Black Community Advisory Council

Wednesday, June 18, 2025 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

St. Dunstan Catholic L.L.C. - Library

Co-Chair: Gord Gallimore

Co-Chair: Wayne Brunton

ATTENDEES:

Gord Gallimore	Parent/Guardian and Co-Chair
Linda Tobi-Isiekwena	Parent/Guardian
Stella Aluze-ele (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Shana Thomas	Parent/Guardian
David Bosveld	Parent/Guardian
Camar Cameron (<i>Regrets</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Musa Bello	Parent/Guardian
Horis Mainza (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Zanitta Grant (<i>Absent</i>)	Parent/Guardian
Aisha Simpson	Parent/Guardian
Raheem White	Student Member
Shanya Samuel (<i>Absent</i>)	Student Member
Kwasi Robinson	Student Member
Sophia Glasgow	Student Member (Non-Voting)
Esther Tengue	Student Member (Non-Voting)
Moy Fung	Agencies – ResQ Youth International
Jackie Maloney	Agencies – Congress of Black Women
Crystel Campbell (<i>Regrets</i>)	Agencies – Black Youth Student Success Initiative
Cherene Randall	Agencies – Salvation Army
Nailah Peters	Agencies – Salvation Army
Sophia Maloney	Agencies – Black Excellence Success Team
Danielle Norris (<i>Absent</i>)	Agencies – Love of Literature Book Club
Duke Nicholson	OECTA Representative – Elementary
Jamie Philip	OECTA Representative – Elementary
Bianca Gagliostro (<i>Absent</i>)	OECTA Representative – Secondary
Nicole Salmon (<i>Absent</i>)	OECTA Representative – Secondary
Bailey Clyne (<i>Absent</i>)	Indigenous Student Trustee
Tara Persad (<i>Regrets</i>)	Elementary Principal/Vice Principal Association
Kwadwo Adusei (<i>Absent</i>)	Secondary Principal/Vice Principal Association
Sharise Sealy-McCallum	Graduation Coach for Black Student Success – DPCDSB

Demari Grant (*Regrets*)
Dr. Carl James

Graduation Coach for Black Student Success – DPCDSB
Advisor – Professor, York University

Wayne Brunton

Staff – Superintendent, Equity and Indigenous Education and
Co-Chair

Nancy Cargioli

Staff – Coordinator, Equitable and Inclusive Education

Jaclynn Deveau

Staff – Consultant, Equitable and Inclusive Education

Joanna Newton

Staff – Consultant, Equity and Indigenous Education

Adriana Sherriff (*Absent*)

Staff – Consultant, Black and Indigenous Identities

Richard Moriah

Staff – Acting Superintendent, Planning and Operations

Caroline McFarland

Recorder

1. Opening Prayer & Liturgy of Hope

Wayne Brunton called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Jaclynn Deveau led with a prayer dedicated to graduating students, Sophia and Esther.

Nancy Cargioli, Wayne Brunton and Joanna Newton led the Liturgy of Hope.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Wayne Brunton read the land acknowledgement.

3. Welcome, Introductions and Attendance

Wayne Brunton welcomed everyone and introduced guests at the meeting.

Attendance

Attendance was taken and those who sent regrets were noted.

Marianne Mazzorato, Director of Education,

Max Vecchiarino, Associate Director of Instructional Services, and

Luz del Rosario, Trustee and Chair of the Board, joined as guests.

4. Approval of the Agenda

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

Moved by Linda Tobi-Isiekwena

Seconded by Duke Nicholson

5. Approval of the Minutes – February 18, 2025

The revised unapproved minutes of February 18, 2025 were distributed to BCAC members via e-mail.

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 18, 2025 MEETING BE APPROVED.

Moved by Linda Tobi-Isiekwena

Seconded by Aisha Simpson

Approval of the Minutes – April 10, 2025

The unapproved minutes of April 10, 2025 were distributed to BCAC members via e-mail.

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 10, 2025 MEETING BE APPROVED.

Moved by Aisha Simpson

Seconded by Nancy Cargioli

6. Action Items

Wayne Brunton advised that action items are items that are brought forward by the council during their discussions. A lot of what transpired from the previous meetings were also related to item 7, which were action steps turned into what are some attainable and actionable goals for BCAC for next year.

They reached out to members interested in being part of a working group. Discussions were led by Nancy and the Equity team to come up with actionable goals to have as a council and bring forward to Executive Council on how to implement them. They came up with five actionable goals brought forward that are in alignment with the Strategic Plan to Dismantle Anti-Black Racism, the Dreams Delayed document from the Ontario Human Rights Commission and calls to action from other boards. Members indicated interest in striking a working group to develop tangible goals to share with the Director and Associate Director.

The five goals were also presented to Director Marianne Mazzorato and Associate Director Max Vecchiarino by Dr. Carl James, Gord Gallimore, Linda Tobi-Isiekwena and Wayne with the understanding they have some items to look at next year and also with a bit of work to uplift by the council or a working group.

7. Goals of the Black Community Advisory Council

Wayne Brunton advised the council of the five goals.

Peer Inclusion: The council expressed interest in looking at pertinent policies which would lead to a building block or foundation to bring change towards racial justice and the elimination of all forms of discrimination. The next step would be to put together a group to look at existing Board policies that brings out language specifically under the Ontario Human Rights Commission as well as language the council requests. The Board currently has four policies that talk about anti-racism, anti-discrimination and specifically takes out language from the Ontario Human Rights Commission. They are the Catholic Code of Conduct, the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy, the Progressive Discipline Policy and the Bullying Awareness Policy. The group would go through these existing policies looking at the language expressed in the policies and either uplift or bring forward some of the things they would like to see as a council. Based on the feedback or how they unpack that, Wayne would then present that to the Director and Executive Council.

School Support: The council expressed interest in increasing funding to directly support Black students. As they are only funded for two graduation coaches in the Board, they looked at some of the things they could do to support the coaches. The coaches serve secondary schools but, through the technical report and the council, they wanted to see if there was anything the coaches could do for elementary schools. Sharise Sealy-McCallum has gone into elementary schools to offer programming and to share information about the Graduation Coach Programming available in secondary schools. The graduation coaches mostly support secondary schools as they have to consider what the census data tells them about graduation rates and the experiences Black students have been bringing forward to their administrators.

Sharise advised that there are two programs that would run out of the elementary schools. One targets any Black students in Grade 8 transitioning to secondary schools. They would talk to them about what BSA looks like and sometimes they would do tours of the secondary schools. They also have a program called Voices which is an anti-racism, anti-oppression program.

They would start that with Grades 4 or 5. Before her maternity leave, they ran the program in 10 to 15 schools. They are hoping that these programs will continue this fall.

Wayne shared they are committed to hiring one Student Success teacher to support infinity spaces with the coaches but that teacher will also support Indigenous students as well. The one key thing they were always looking to add to the graduation coach program was the academic component. The SST will also help with credit recovery, timetabling, attendance, connecting with students'

teachers, connecting with the school's SST, liaising with administration in collaboration with the coaches. This will be an additional layer that they do not have now.

Program: The council expressed interest in continued funding to support community engagement events. BCAC would like to host parent and caregiver information sessions for Black families regarding Regional Programs in which Black students are underrepresented. They will continue with the Post-Secondary Nights, System Navigation Night and STEAM Night for Black identifying families. All the parent engagement nights they previously had will continue staying away from May and June. If they plan the System Navigation Night for the end of September or beginning of October, a lot more parents may attend. Also, there is a Read-Aloud in December with Santa and a number of events planned through the coaches for students. There will be continued focus on professional learning surrounding de-streaming and professional development with guidance counsellors having an anti-oppressive and intersectional lens that centers a culturally relevant and responsive pedagogical framework.

Math and Literacy: The council expressed interest in placing specific focus on addressing disparities in Math and Science outcomes for Black students. The council would like to look at what goals, initiatives and strategies will be put into place for Black and Indigenous students to achieve better math and literacy scores. Working in collaboration with the Program Department, they will look at funding for de-streaming and specific program funding.

In the fall, the Superintendent of Policy, Strategy, Research, Safe Schools will come in to talk about the Catholic Board Improvement Learning Cycle goals. They will have a better picture of what their numeracy and literacy goals will be for Black identifying students once they map how it is going to look and how it will reach the classroom.

Linda Tobi-Isiekwena suggested that the System Navigation night be planned for September instead of October because by October the children are already settled and have probably already done their course selection. She also asked for Executive Council's support to help get the message out through school newsletters to drive the engagement.

Marianne Mazzorato shared that a lot of the secondary schools have a Get Ready Program that runs a week before school starts for Grade 8 students entering Grade 9. The whole focus around that is to help students transition. This could be an opportunity to think about what the Get Ready Program may look like, not only for Black identifying students entering Grade 9 but also their parents. Parents are most engaged when they think about the first day of school and even in Grade 8 when they are starting to think about course selection for Grade 9. That is the opportunity to really help parents and students in Grade 8 to start thinking about the various pathways available to them and really uplift and highlight math and science because the data shows that there are groups that are less likely to choose math or science though much of the world is driven by math and science. Is it because there is not any interest in it or because they are really struggling with it? How do they, at a much earlier age, try to support and help parents and students? Thinking about the Get Ready Program in a different way may be interesting and supportive.

A discussion ensued.

Addressing Discipline: The council was asking that when they use progressive discipline and the Catholic Code of Conduct for Black and Indigenous students, to provide alternatives to suspensions and expulsions especially for younger students. There should be a protocol in place where the Superintendent of Equity and Indigenous Education is informed of levels of suspensions and

expulsions. With high levels of suspensions and expulsions, the Director, Associate Director, Superintendent of Policy, Strategy, Research, Safe Schools, Superintendent of the school and Wayne are informed.

Wayne advised that all the policies in the Board are reviewed annually by the Policy Review Committee so that they are looked at by different lens and different structures of the Board. Wayne would then consult with the Director to suggest revisions or restructuring of the policy. Executive Council provides final approval before they are brought to the Board By-Law/Policies Review Committee in which the Board of Trustees support and put forth their policies.

Max Vecchiarino commented that with regard to the balance between a dedicated policy and looking at existing policies, it would make a lot of sense to review more than one policy from that perspective so that the focus on the work is woven through a variety of texts to make sure we are paying attention through more than one content. Board policies are basically the laws of the school board.

A discussion ensued.

Wayne shared that with high level suspensions and expulsions, an administrators role includes an intentional focus on student identity if a suspension includes a Black or Indigenous student. Administrators ensure all supports are provided to students throughout any suspensions and/or expulsions. With the Safe Schools Act, school boards are responsible for continuing the students academics and programming. There are alternative programming for families who wish to participate during a long term suspension or expulsion. When things are brought forward regarding anti-Black racism, they have a duty and obligation to respond. They have to ensure the dignity and confidentiality of the families and students involved is upheld.

Max commented that they have six Instructional Superintendents and more are having meaningful conversations with principals when suspensions, expulsions or even minor infractions take place. With the notice of suspension they need to provide supports for the student who might be disciplined. Maybe they need to move away from the concept of a Safety Plan and look at a Support Plan for the individuals who might have been harmed but also to the school as a whole, which he thinks is especially helpful. In terms of their focus on Catholic Social Teaching, their aim is to always bring students back into the school or potentially another school. The focus is that, should there be time away from the mainstream school, they do everything they can to minimize that time once students have demonstrated that they are ready or able to come back.

A discussion ensued.

Marianne shared that they have made inquiries with the College of Teachers around how many applicants they are receiving from Black identifying individuals who are interested in teaching. On the Board's hiring website there is a very specific statement around the importance of diversifying our workforce. If Black identifying teachers are applying in any occupation in the Board, they are absolutely motivated to diversify our workforce. They can share the status around the number of administrators who have been appointed to principal and vice principal positions. She is really pleased to see that some of the administrators who are identified as Black are now pursuing supervisory officer positions. They have a very strong mentoring program for candidates pursuing principal and vice principal positions. They want supports in place so that they can be successful. Any time they have openings, her first question is do they have Black identifying and diverse candidates in the pool and that has been prioritized. One of the challenges the Catholic boards

have is the requirement for candidates to be Catholic with a pastoral reference letter. They have not been successful in getting the information from the Colleges of Teachers to really understand how many are coming through that are Catholic and identify as Black.

Marianne commented that they continue to work toward diversifying our workforce and ensuring that the individuals that are in front of students are representative of them. It is still important for everyone to know how to respond to and be concerned about every student, especially those students who disproportionately are not successful in the system. That work is ongoing as well to ensure the entire workforce understands the impact of the work and understands the importance of the impact of racism. With regard to math teachers, the Ministry of Education provides the AQ course for free to teachers. It would be interesting to see whether or not the providers of the math AQ course also weave into it culturally and pedagogically responsive opportunities for learning so that they are engaging all students, especially Black identifying students. They are never going to have all that they want but the workforce always needs to have some responsibility and accountability about serving all students.

Linda asked if Executive Council could provide the council with the data on how many Black identifying teachers have applied to Dufferin-Peel and how many were employed. That could also become a disincentive for why they may not have Black identifying teachers applying.

Linda commented that she presumes and believes that the Board has been extremely busy and she knows how busy Trustee Luz del Rosario was but she wanted to share that as a recommendation from the council, they are hoping that in the new academic year they could get empathy as to how the Board reacts and how quickly the Board reacts when things happen in the Black community. Secondly, they would like visible support. There are 14 trustees but not one trustee showed up for any Black event held this academic year. Not one trustee showed up for even five, ten or twenty minutes to say, 'I see you. I support you but I am sorry I have another event to attend.' It would be nice if that story would change.

Trustee Luz del Rosario apologized that she was not able to make any events this school year as it was a little difficult for her. She asked that they send all trustees an invitation and she will definitely try to attend an event. She had attended the Black Excellence event a couple of years ago and it was an amazing event. She will take back the council's recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

8. Information Items:

a. Board Updates

Marianne Mazzorato thanked everyone for inviting her. In conversation with Dr. Carl James, he identified some updated action items for the team. She was there to listen in order to act. Her support of the action items will be tangible and Wayne was linked into that. She knows that there is a desire for her to attend at least a couple of times a year and she would be very open to those invitations and be visible at events.

Trustee Luz del Rosario stated that she was very happy to be there and whenever she gets the chance, she would like to attend and here the council's concerns and bring them back to her colleagues and the Board as something to discuss. She thanked everyone for putting in their time to be there. The council's input was very important to them. She has also been part of the interview panels and first they make sure the candidates are qualified and then they look for diversification. That is the goal but the process has been a little slow.

Max Vecchiarino shared that through the work of B.E.S.T. bolstered by the work of this council, for the first time ever 20% of school principals in secondary school are Black identifying with a significant number of vice principals. They have always seemed to have had more Black identifying principals in elementary.

Max shared that with Marianne's support, next year the instructional team is working on renewing its school improvement effort and Wayne will be an integral part of that work. At the start of the school year, they would like the council's help with that as well. Wayne will bring that work back to the council. They want all students to be successful but that success does not happen without a lot of input on a lot of conversations.

Wayne Brunton commented that a lot of information was unpacked and as a council, when they regroup in September, they will need to have more actionable steps to have more specifics in their plan and review some policies that they have.

A discussion ensued.

9. Closing Remarks

Wayne Brunton thanked the council on behalf of his Equity staff for their support with the work they were doing. They are also the one's listening to them and informing them of the work. The Equity team could not do it without this council. This Board is one of the few boards that have a Black Community Advisory Council and it speaks volumes to all the initiatives and all the supports that they have.

He offered the closing prayer for everyone to have a wonderful, relaxing summer with their families and for the graduates as they embark on their next journey. Wayne led the closing prayer.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.