



CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS - BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

Education and Student Services Committee Public Meeting

**Wednesday, February 17, 2021, 6:00 pm
Via Zoom**

Board of Education: Trustee N. Bowman, Chairperson
Trustee C. Desrosiers, Committee Member
Trustee A. Geistlinger, Committee Member
Trustee M. Baxter

Staff: Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO
Terry-Lee Beaudry, Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Yvonne Hildebrandt, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

Partner Groups: Lori Dawson Bedard, COTA 1st Vice-President
Lahine Farstad, COPAC Member
Raquel Steen, COPVPA, Past President
Teri Wishlow, CUPE Vice-President

There were no representatives from the District Student Council.

**The Central Okanagan Board of Education acknowledged that this meeting was being held
on the unceded, Traditional Territory of the Okanagan People.**

AGENDA

February 17, 2021 Committee Agenda - approved as presented.

REPORTS/MATTERS ARISING

Education and Student Services Committee Report - January 20, 2021

January 20, 2021 Committee Report - received as distributed.

RECOGNITION/PRESENTATION/DELEGATIONS

Supporting Students

Terry-Lee Beaudry, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, shared that the District endeavors each day to provide equitable access and supports for every learner to thrive. Some students become a priority because they experience a greater number of challenges leading to underperformance, disengagement and non-attendance. These priority students are enrolled in elementary, middle, and secondary schools and eSchool23, and can be children in care or marginalized students. By working alongside school teams, caregivers and community agencies, the District aims to understand each student's story and determine the best possible wrap around supports to meet the needs of each priority student.

Responding to Elevated Needs of Our Students

Al Lalonde, Assistant Superintendent, and Sherri McKinnon, District Principal – Learning Support Services, shared a presentation on responding to the elevated needs of Central Okanagan Public Schools students. Students experiencing a greater number of challenges require additional support and some of the needs have become more elevated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The District has increased mental health supports, mental health initiatives and community partnerships this school year to support all students and families. Food provision programs for students with higher needs include the daily Brown Bag Lunch (BBL) program, the daily Breakfast Program and the weekly food Backpack Program. Although the BBL program is provided by the District through CommunityLINK (Learning Includes Nutrition and Knowledge) funding, the Breakfast and Backpack Programs are made possible through donations by numerous organizations and private donors.

Supporting Students Enrolled in eSchool23

Jon Rever, Assistant Superintendent, Jordan Kleckner, District Principal – Learning Technology, and John Morrone, Vice-Principal – Learning Technology, shared a presentation on supporting students enrolled in eSchool23. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in additional time and effort dedicated to providing quality online education for all students. Currently this school year, the total number of learners served by eSchool23 is between 1500 and 1600 kindergarten to grade 12 students, approximately a 30 percent increase over the 2019-2020 school year.

While most learners and families are engaged and students are progressing well, consistent attendance and engagement is a challenge for some learners. Strategies in place to support each learner include regular connections via zoom for one-to-one support with online teachers (K-12), home visit wellness checks, the Project Literacy Virtual 1 to 1 Reading program, school-based eSchool23 Support Teachers in secondary schools, eSchool23 supporting staff, and a District-wide collaborative student support model.

The parent-school learning partnership is paramount for students enrolled in eSchool23 and the family is viewed as a co-teacher. The need for social interactions has increased this year and the eSchool23 team is working together to provide more opportunities for students and families. Proactive activities via Zoom that promote culture and social-emotional wellbeing are being offered and eClubs in Action is a new initiative aimed to reach struggling learners as well as increase peer engagement and social connections through a fun, on-line platform.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Advocacy for Children in Care – Part 1

Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO, and Terry-Lee Beaudry, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, provided a presentation on the Advocacy for Children in Care (Part 1) in Central Okanagan Public Schools. Part two of this presentation will be shared at a future Education and Student Services Meeting.

In October 2017, the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) publicly released the *Room for Improvement: Toward Better Education Outcomes for Children in Care*. The report clearly stated that Children and Youth in Care (CYIC) continue to experience significant gaps in their school achievement when compared to students who are not in care. The RCY 2017 Report conducted a comprehensive review to determine how well CYIC in BC are being supported to improve their success in school; what challenges exist; and how supports can be improved to help narrow these significant gaps in academic achievement. The RCY report identified critical themes to improve school success for CYIC and six recommendations were outlined.

In September 2018, the Ministry of Education published the *How Are We Doing? Children and Youth in Government Care and Youth on Youth Agreements* Report in response to the RCY recommendations. The Ministry of Education's report outlined key findings and focused on educational outcomes of CYIC at the provincial level. The specific progress made toward achieving the recommendations from the RCY report related to enhanced communication between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the implementation of additional support systems were not provided in this report.

Within Central Okanagan Public Schools, there has been some progress made in advancing Recommendation #4 from the RCY report; specifically, the Central Okanagan Public Schools and the local Ministry of Children and Family Development have connected Directors of Operations, from MCFD, with Assistant Superintendents and Directors of Instruction to enhance information sharing. There is also interest to meet more regularly to explore new strategies and support structures to support local CYIC as well as problem solve ongoing challenges related to supporting vulnerable children and youth, communication flow, and responding to time sensitive issues.

At the provincial level, it is anticipated that more information regarding the progress towards achieving the RCY report recommendations will be released prior to the end of the school year.

Outcome:

The Committee recommended that the Board of Education write a letter to the Ministry of Education requesting an update on the Ministry of Education's progress towards responding to the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) Report: *Room for Improvement: Toward Better Education Outcomes for Children in Care (2017)*.

ITEMS REQUIRING SPECIAL MENTION

Harmony Day 2021 Focus on Courage to be Inclusive: Deconstructing Otherness

Terry-Lee Beaudry, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, reported that on Wednesday, February 17, 2021, Central Okanagan Public Schools celebrated the 14th Annual Harmony Day. This year's Harmony Day theme was Courage, with a strong focus on anti racism, equity and inclusiveness. The District's Harmony Day Committee provided educators with resources and lesson guides to allow for deeper reflection and conversation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District hosted a virtual Living Library with speakers from the district and community joining through Zoom to share their stories. Kevin Lamoureux, a Faculty member at the University of Winnipeg, presented the Keynote address, "Deconstructing Otherness", to approximately 53 elementary and middle school classrooms and 23 secondary classrooms that signed up to hear the presentation. In the past, Harmony Day's Living Library was attended in the Hollywood Road Education Services gym by approximately 150 students. This year's virtual platform was a wonderful opportunity for approximately 1500 students to participate and be inspired to take on change and stand up against racism.

RECOMMENDATIONS/REFERRALS TO THE BOARD/COORDINATING COMMITTEE/OTHER COMMITTEES

Public Board Meeting Action Item

- The Board of Education to write a letter to the Ministry of Education requesting an update on the Ministry of Education's progress towards responding to the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) Report: *Room for Improvement: Toward Better Education Outcomes for Children in Care (2017)*

ITEMS FOR FUTURE EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

April 21, 2021

- Proposals for Board Authority/Authorized Courses
- Student Support Services (Level 2 Review)
Director of Instruction (P. Molloy)

May 19, 2021

- Draft Program Review Cycle and Meeting Schedule 2021-2022
Deputy Superintendent (T. Beaudry)
- Equity in Action Progress Report
District Principal (J. De Guevara)

June 16, 2021

- Enhancing Student Learning Framework
Superintendent of Schools/CEO (K. Kaardal)

REVIEW LEGEND

Level One Review

- District-wide surveys involving all stakeholders
- Focus Groups
- Interviews with key staff and clients

Level Two Review

- Surveys to a representative sample group of stakeholders
- Optional Focus Groups and personnel interviews as appropriate

Level Three Review

Limited or no surveying and/or interviews to gather informal feedback

FUTURE EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

April 21, 2021, May 19, 2021, June 16, 2021, September 22, 2021, October 20, 2021,
November 17, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 7:58 pm.

Questions - Please Contact:

Trustee Norah Bowman, Chairperson at Norah.Bowman@sd23.bc.ca

Terry-Lee Beaudry, Deputy Superintendent of Schools at 250-470-3225 or Terry.Beaudry@sd23.bc.ca

Norah Bowman, Chairperson