

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2023

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Members:
K. Maracle B. Godkin	Present: Mandy Smart (LDSB Cultural Advisor) Crystal Loft (LDSB Cultural Advisor) Candace Lloyd Deb St. Amant (Queen's University & Grandmother's Council) Jennifer Kehoe (Parent Rep) Romaine Mitchell (Ministry of Ontario) Jonnathan Marconi (Highland Waters Métis Council) Lindsay Rogers (Highland Waters Métis Council) Sandy Maracle (Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte) Pat Brinklow (Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte) Lindsay Morcom (Queen's & Ardoch First Nation) Kristen Lemay (Kingston Public Library) Danka Brewer (Shabot Obaadjiwan Omaamiwininii Community)
	Staff:
	Present: O. Rondeau, Vice-Principal of Indigenous Education and Reconciliation Lead S. Tyner, Principal, Ernestown Secondary S. Gillam, Superintendent, C. Michie, Indigenous Secondary Teacher
Guests:	Recorder:
None at this time.	J. Senior, Administrative Assistant

1. WELCOME

Deb St. Amant opened meeting the meeting in a good way.

2. COMMITMENT STRING

Crystal Loft and Mandy Smart provided the teachings on Commitment Strings. All IEC members in attendance completed their own personal commitment string. A sign to all walk together in a good way for the Indigenous students and their families.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Mandy Smart that the agenda be approved. Carried.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were taken at the Strategic Planning session with Director Burra.

5. TEAM UPDATES

Superintendent Scot Gillam presented the following team updates:

Summer Programming

From July 31st to August 4th the Indigenous Education Team ran a land-based summer camp for self-identified Indigenous students. We had 25 students register to attend the camp and each day they travelled to a different location including Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, Elbow Lake Conservation Area, Belle Island Park, The City Park Indigenous Food Sovereignty Garden, and Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. Each day focused on a different element of building a relationship with Mother Earth including plant relatives, water, trees, animals, and more. We were joined by a local Grandmother, Deb St. Amant each day to support with cultural teachings and learning as well as a variety of Indigenous community members from different nations throughout the week. The camp was overall very successful, and we look forward to running it again this summer, hopefully extending the weeks offered.

Language Instruction

Tahnee Bennett will continue to provide instruction in Kanyen'kéha starting in October. Danka Brewer is supporting Algonquin instruction weekly at GREC and will expand out to Sydenham High School and potentially other SHS family of schools. Unfortunately, Kim Debassige, our most recent Anishinaabemowin Language Instructor left us in mid-August for a wonderful opportunity for her and her family. We have been trying to locate another instructor(s) and will hopefully

have a solution soon. In the meantime, we will be working with the Kingston Native Centre and Languages Nest on a variety of strategies and opportunities to expand Indigenous languages across the LDSB. We are always actively recruiting Indigenous language teachers, but it is extremely difficult to find them. We will continue to adjust our strategies and work with local partners to meet needs as best as we can.

River Program

This year, we are no longer operating through the Métis Nation of Ontario. Instead, River is now being served through the (OFIFC) Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centre's Alternative Secondary School Program, run by the Kingston Native Centre and Language Nest. This partnership brings with it a fresh perspective and new resources, which we are positive will enrich the program.

About KNCLN - the Kingston Native Centre and Language Nest

The Kingston Native Centre and Language Nest (KNCLN) is a local Friendship Centre under the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC). Before becoming a Friendship Centre earlier this year, the organisation was the Kingston Indigenous Language Nest (KILN).

There is a new River Coordinator, Taylor Tye, who is supporting the program. We are very excited about this new partnership and will provide classroom updates to IEC regularly.

Bridge

The goal this year is to expand the Bridge program to support students in Grades 7 and 8. We are currently working with KLC administration on securing a location. We anticipate that this program will be able to be operational in early 2024. The current Bridge program is up and running and is doing great. Future updates for IEC will include classroom activities and opportunities.

Indigenous Coaching Position

LDSB has added an Indigenous Coaching Position to support literacy and numeracy instruction practices with LDSB teachers using an Indigenous Education perspective. This individual will also support the other coaches in supporting both their practice and the practice of the teachers they are supporting in using Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing to support both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Interviews were conducted earlier this week and we anticipate announcing this later this week.

Professional Development

Right now, we are planning at least 4 sessions of Professional development workshops for teachers and staff across the board. In collaboration with multiple program team members, we are currently in the process of providing specific PD days with the following:

- NAC 10 teachers, which focuses on how to teach and learn about Indigenous Art and Artists in a good way
- Literacy coaches
- Experiential Ed. Educators
- Core French Teachers
- New Teacher Induction Program
- TRC Leads

Skátne Yonkwateweyéhstha (We are all learning together) - Indigenous Education Course

This course is open to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and educators from across K-12. This is an opportunity to explore topics within Indigenous education, such as:

- Terminology that is accepted today
- Understanding the 4 R's (Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility)
- Understanding Positionality and Our Roles in Indigenous Education
- Exploring Art and Culture as a Form of Literacy, while addressing cultural appropriation.
- Vetting Resources and Taking a Culturally Sustainable Approach to Indigenous Education
- Treaty Education – Understanding Our Roles as Treaty People
- The Land as First Teacher – Understanding our Responsibilities to All Our Relations
- Past and Present Manifestations of Colonialism
- Decoloniality

Allyship Café

This course is dedicated to those who are committed to learning about meaningful allyship and what it looks like in action. We are dedicated to creating a safe space where individuals can ask questions or express concerns they have related to Indigenous education. We hope to help non-Indigenous educators feel prepared to support Indigenous education in their schools. We will explore topics such as:

- Holistic teaching and nourishing the learning spirit through teaching and learning.
- Acknowledging and moving past mistakes in a good way.
- Understanding how to bring community members into your classroom in a good way.
- Relationship building with community.
- Understanding the difference between decolonization and Indigenization.
- Decolonizing STEM

Curriculum Changes in Depth

There have been multiple changes to curriculum with the last few months that specifically discuss Indigenous peoples and Indigenous education. We are gathering these changes and recommending explicit activities that teachers can do with their students, in response to these changes.

Lake Ontario Park Days

This is a continued project from the last few years, where we invite teachers and classes to come to Lake Ontario Park to learn from Community Members and Land. Topics for these days usually include interconnectedness, All Our Relations, Living in Right Relations, and students also get to experience Indigenous games and dances. The next Lake Ontario Park days are happening at the end of October.

Truth and Reconciliation Activities and Supports

The system was supported by resources and online opportunities, sent out to the system earlier in September.

Terms of Reference – IEC

Section 6.0 – Facilitator and Co-Facilitator – for the 2023/24 term, Scot Gillam will be the Facilitator of IEC and Kelly Maracle, LDSB Indigenous Trustee will be the Co-Facilitator

Section 5.0 Term

According to the Terms of Reference, the length of a term for the Indigenous Education Committee is from September to June of any given school year. Members are required to establish their continued interest in maintaining a seat with the Indigenous Education Committee each June for September of the upcoming school year. IEC members will re-evaluate membership annually. As this was not completed last year, Superintendent Gillam outlined a process so that Indigenous Community members, community organizations and parents/caregivers could establish their commitments to IEC for this upcoming year. Once established, the IEC could look at establishing numbers and maybe a longer term to provide for consistency on IEC and lessen the need for expressions of interest to every other year, or every three years. This will be determined by IEC prior to June 2024.

Indigenous Community representatives expressing their interest to remain on IEC will provide an explanation of why they want to be on IEC and provide supporting documentation from their community.

Community organizations will provide confirmation of the individual nominated, an expression of interest and supporting documentation from the organization lead.

Parents/caregivers will provide expressions of interest and their commitment to IEC. All parents/caregivers are still welcome to attend, but won't be officially part of the Committee.

The timelines discussed were to have Indigenous community members and community

organizations completed during the month of October and parents/caregivers completed in early November.

6. FLAG PROTOCOL, BRIDGE EXPANSION, COMMUNICATION

6.1 Flag Protocol

Jennifer Kehoe discussed having an official ceremony for the raising and taking down of the Every Child Matters and Survivors Flags. Several community members discussed treating the flag with respect but not ceremony. Superintendent Gillam and Vice Principal Rondeau to send out reminders to schools to treat the flags with respect at all times.

6.2 Bridge Expansion

Jennifer Kehoe discussed the need for the Bridge Program to expand so that it also includes Grade 7 and 8. Superintendent Gillam provided an update that this is the goal for February of 2024 and may also include Grade 6 students.

6.3 Communication

Jennifer Kehoe discussed her concerns of not being able to communicate with other IEC members due to the use of “bcc”. Superintendent Gillam discussed security issues with not using the “bcc” and committed to ensuring that communication will be open and transparent despite having to use “bcc.”

7. CLOSING

Deb St. Amant closed the meeting in a good way.