

**Report of the Durham District School Board  
Standing Committee Public Session  
September 5, 2023**

A meeting of the Standing Committee of the Durham District School Board was held on this date.

1. Call to Order:

The Chair, Christine Thatcher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Chair Christine Thatcher

Members Present: Trustees Michelle Arseneault, Tracy Brown, Emma Cunningham, Donna Edwards, Stephen Linton, Kelly Miller, Carolyn Morton, Deb Oldfield, Jill Thompson, Student Trustees Ben Cameron, Kayla Hoare, Neha Kasoju

Regrets: Shailene Panylo

Not In Attendance: Trustee Linda Stone

Officials Present: Director of Education and Secretary to the Board Camille Williams-Taylor, Associate Directors Jim Markovski, David Wright, Superintendents Gary Crossdale, Erin Elmhurst, Mohamed Hamid, Margaret Lazarus, Andrea McAuley, Heather Mundy, Stephen Nevills, Kandis Thompson, Martine Robinson, Executive Lead Robert Cerjanec, General Counsel Patrick Cotter

Recording Secretary: Kathy Fitzpatrick

2. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Christine Thatcher gave the Land Acknowledgment: The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this time.

4. Motion to Approve the Agenda

2023:SC27

MOVED by Trustee Donna Edwards

SECONDED by Trustee Deb Oldfield

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

5. Community Presentations

Trustee Christine Thatcher welcomed the delegate, provided an overview of the delegation process and shared that the Durham District School Board welcomes presentations by individuals and groups at the Standing Committee meetings. The trustees heard from one delegate with regards to the Teachers Mentor Abroad Program.

6. Director's Update

Director Camille Williams-Taylor provided trustees with the following update:

Good evening and welcome to the 2023-2024 school year. Today is a special day with classes resuming in most schools. However, recognizing that for our modified calendar schools, have had classes continuing since last month. Staff have been hard at work the past several weeks and months planning and preparing for the return to school, and we are so grateful for the efforts of central staff, clerical and custodial/maintenance staff in ensuring our schools are ready for the school year.

The transitions that students are making to return to class includes student transportation to and from school. Based on the relatively small number of delays we saw this morning; it is fair to say that the work that Durham Student Transportation Services (DSTS) staff have put in over the last number of weeks has resulted in a relatively smooth start-up from a transportation perspective. Bus operators are doing all they can to continue to recruit and retain staff, resulting in all routes having drivers to start the year. Enrolment registration has been quite high in a few areas of the District. Students registering who are eligible for transportation may experience delays as DSTS works through the routing process. We encourage families to stay up to date on their child's bus route by subscribing to automated notifications through DSTS and the Parent Portal.

The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, also known as Bill 98, came into effect on June 8, 2023 and over the summer, school boards across the province have received direction related to updated Ministry of Education Regulations and Policies to be implemented this fall. The Act outlines changes that will further prioritize and support student achievement and well-being while increasing transparency for families and school communities around Board initiatives. The Ministry has prioritized a renewed focus on Mathematics along with expectations for targeted and precise instruction in reading that will include early

screening to identify student needs and inform reading instruction. Curriculum changes include revisions to Grade 1 to 9 Language, Financial Literacy Modules for secondary students and a new Grade 10 Digital Technology and Innovations in the Changing World course.

The goal of the student achievement priorities intended to help students improve student outcomes in reading, writing and math; prepare for future success to raise graduation rates, encourage more students to participate in job skills programs and take senior math and science courses; and improve student engagement and awareness of mental health supports.

Families and students will continue to learn about these renewed priorities through their schools as we implement over the course of the 2023-2024 school year. We will also highlight some of these developments through presentations and system highlights in our Standing Committee and Board meetings.

On behalf of the entire Senior Team, I am pleased to once again welcome the entire DDSB community to what is sure to be a successful 2023-2024 school year.

7. Recommended Actions

There were no recommended actions at this time.

8. Information Items

(a) Student Trustee Report

Student Trustees provided the following update:

The new incoming Student Trustees Neha Kasoju and Kayla Hoare introduced themselves to the Board of Trustees.

Neha Kasoju, the newly elected Student Trustee for Whitby-Oshawa shared that her mission is to enhance the student experience by fostering hands-on experiences beyond the classroom and to collaborate with students to create resources and initiatives. Trustee Kasoju will work to amplify student voice.

Kayla Hoare, the newly elected Student Trustee for Brock-Scugog-Uxbridge shared that her priority is to include all student voices, highlight student leadership opportunities, and create a stronger outreach towards all schools so students can get more involved with their education.

Returning Student Trustee Ben Cameron shared that he attended the OSTA-AECO Conference for the new Leadership Team in July. At the conference discussions took place on strategy, direction, and goals for the upcoming year, and how to advocate for students across the province. The upcoming leadership meeting is taking place on September 23, 2023, and our first conference is taking

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place October 19-22, 2023. The Ministry of Education Student Trustee Orientation is taking place September 12 and 14, 2023.

The first Student Senate meeting is taking place on October 5, 2023, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

(b) Trustee Professional Development Report Back Re: Canadian Congress of Black Parliamentarians Conference

Trustees Tracy Brown, Stephen Linton and Shailene Panylo provided trustees with an overview of the conference that they attended August 9-11, 2023, in Ottawa.

Trustee questions were answered.

(c) OPSBA Report

There was nothing to report at this time.

9. Adjournment

2023:SC28

MOVED by Trustee Christine Thatcher

THAT THE MEETING DOES NOW ADJOURN.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:28 p.m.



Chair



Secretary