

APPROVED

MINUTES

The Regular Meeting of the Board Tuesday, May 20, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Durham District School Board was held on this date.

1. Call to Order:

Chair Tracy Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Trustees Michelle Arseneault, Emma Cunningham, Donna Edwards, Mark Jacula, Stephen Linton, Kelly Miller, Carolyn Morton, Deb Oldfield, Shailene Panylo, Christine Thatcher, Student Trustees Kayla Hoare, Nitishan Poopalasundaram, Shampavi Vijayakumar

Regrets: None

Officials Present: Director of Education Camille Williams-Taylor, Associate Director David Wright, Associate Director Jim Markovski, Superintendents Lauren Bliss, Michael Bowman, Mohamed Hamid, Heather Mundy, Margaret Lazarus, Andrea McAuley, Stephen Nevills, Martine Robinson (virtual), Kandis Thompson, General Counsel Patrick Cotter, Senior Manager Dervla Kelly

Recording Secretary: Gillian Venning

2. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Tracy Brown 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. O Canada

Trustee Carolyn Morton welcomed and thanked the R H Cornish Hands of Cornish for their sign language performance of *O Canada*.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Adoption of Agenda

2025:RB29

MOVED by Trustee Emma Cunningham

SECONDED by Trustee Kelly Miller

THAT THE AGENDA BE AMENDED TO MOVE ITEM 12(b), MEMO 2425:77, SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASS – GIFTED 2025-2026 TO 11(a) UNDER INFORMATION ITEMS AND THAT THE AMENDED AGENDA BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

6. Proposed Consent Items

As there were no objections, the following proposed consent items were approved and adopted:

(a) Approval of meeting minutes:

- i. DRAFT Minutes of the April 22, 2025 Regular Board Meeting
- ii. DRAFT Minutes of the May 5, 2025 Special Board Meeting

(b) Adoption of the Following Resolution from the April 30, 2025 Governance and Policy Committee Meeting, which the Committee Recommended to the Board:

- i. That the Board Rescind the Recovery of Salary Overpayment Policy and Regulation

(c) Adoption of Any Resolutions from the In Camera, Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 20, 2025.

7. Public Question Period

Dylan Reynolds joined the meeting in person and asked a question regarding DDSB@Home. Staff responded to the question.

Anjali Joshi joined the meeting in person and asked a question regarding special education program placements. Staff responded to the question.

Staff read and responded to a question from Varun Paliwal regarding special education program placements.

Staff read and responded to a question from Eva Kyriakides regarding special education program placements.

Staff read and responded to a series of 12 questions regarding secondary modified calendar schools.

8. Chair's Update

Chair Tracy Brown shared the following update on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

As we head into the last months of the school year, it's a busy time for both staff and students across the DDSB and as Trustees, we had the pleasure of attending many wonderful events over the past few weeks.

On April 29, we rolled out the red carpet for an unforgettable evening of celebration at the annual Student Recognition Night awards ceremony. Cheers filled the air as three inspiring students from each high school were recognized for their courage, leadership, and unwavering commitment to making a difference—whether by championing their communities, rising above personal challenges, or standing up for others. To all the amazing students we celebrated—bravo! The future is bright with you in it, and we can't wait to see where your journeys take you next.

Trustees Kelly Miller and Carolyn Morton joined students at the Education Centre on May 2 for the Leading the Way to Wellness conference. 125 Grade 7 students were provided tools and strategies for social-emotional learning and healthy decision making. Students collaborated in various breakout sessions focused on building healthy relationships, managing stress, and understanding the importance of sleep and mental health.

On May 3, the Maamawi iyaawag school community celebrated its official grand opening. Guests had the opportunity to learn about the meaning and significance of the school's Indigenous name, participate in land-based activities, and experience powerful performances.

Whitby Trustees were excited to visit Julie Payette, Brooklin Village, and Ormiston Public Schools this month. At Julie Payette Public School, Principal Coutu shared how students of all ages worked together to build a Lego Hogwarts Castle. The idea was to provide students with an opportunity to collaborate on a project while also using de-escalation strategies. In addition, a Grade 8 girls book writing club created a picture book to support Grade 1 students entering the school community. Over 300 books have been printed so far!

Over at Brooklin Village Public School, Trustee Thatcher attended a performance of *Shrek Junior the Musical*. Students and staff worked hard all year to put on a spectacular show. Special thanks to Brooklin Village staff including Kim Dunn, Nikki Slessor, Noelle Leombruni, Todd Ferguson, and students in Sharon Bassit's classes.

A dedicated team at Ormiston Public School came together to create a truly special production of *Aladdin*. From the props and costumes to the talented students, the show

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was an unforgettable success. Congratulations to Ormiston staff including Melissa Hutchings, Andrew Cohen, Gloria Park, Ashley Henwood, and Fiona Young.

Since our last update, Vice Chair Oldfield and I have hit the road, joining School Community Council meetings at Fallingbrook and Vincent Massey Public Schools. The cross-district listening tour has been a powerful way to hear directly from DDSB parents and guardians about what matters most in their children's education. We're wrapping up the tour with our final stop at William Dunbar Public School on June 12.

Another highlight for trustees was the fourth annual DDSB Student Art Exhibit, which was centered on the theme of 'Belonging'. The exhibit showcased over 100 pieces of student artwork, including intricate sketches, dynamic mixed media compositions and incredible sculptures, each reflecting unique creativity to illustrating what means to feel a sense of belonging in their school and broader community. The event also included performances by the Anderson Collegiate Vocational Institute Student Band. Anyone who was unable to visit in person can check out the digital gallery on the DDSB website.

As we move through the final stretch of the school year, we are reminded of the incredible dedication, creativity, and resilience shown by our staff, students, and school communities. The past few weeks have been filled with inspiring moments that highlight the strength of our system and the many ways learning, leadership, and belonging come to life across the DDSB.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you to everyone who continues to contribute to this important work. We look forward to supporting and celebrating the accomplishments still to come as we close out the year and we extend our sincerest appreciation to retiring Superintendent Margaret Lazarus.

9. Good News from the System

Lucas and Loju from Westcreek PS shared good news from across the system on behalf of DDSB students via video presentation.

10. Recommended Actions

(a) Modified Secondary School Calendar

Associate Director Jim Markovski provided an overview of the report, presented in response to an April 22, 2025 motion from the Board of Trustees requesting additional information to support informed decision making around the future of the modified calendar school year at the following DDSB secondary schools: Brock High School, Henry Street High School and Maxwell Heights Secondary School. It was noted that a review of the secondary modified school year calendar was undertaken in fall/winter of the current school year in response to a June 2024 motion of the Board of Trustees directing staff to complete a review and report back on the findings. The report provides analysis across several factors reviewed: access and boundaries, student achievement, student attendance, student discipline, elementary to secondary transitions, student engagement, extra-curricular participation, parental and community engagement and

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student well-being.

The report concludes with a recommendation that the three secondary modified calendar schools return to the regular calendar beginning in September 2026.

2025:RB30

MOVED by Trustee Michelle Arseneault

SECONDED by Trustee Kelly Miller

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO RETURN THE THREE SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON MODIFIED CALENDARS (BROCK HIGH SCHOOL, HENRY STREET HIGH SCHOOL AND MAXWELL HEIGHTS SECONDARY SCHOOL) TO THE REGULAR SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR.

Discussion took place and trustee questions were answered. Through discussion, some trustees expressed concern that the recommendation contained in the report is not responsive to the feedback received through the consultation process as part of the program review.

Trustee Shailene Panylo called for a recorded vote.

The motion was defeated on the following recorded vote:

| Yes | No | Absent | Abstain |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------|---------|
| Michelle Arseneault | | | |
| | Emma Cunningham | | |
| | Donna Edwards | | |
| | Mark Jacula | | |
| | Kelly Miller | | |
| | Stephen Linton | | |
| | Carolyn Morton | | |
| | Deb Oldfield | | |
| | Shailene Panylo | | |
| | Christine Thatcher | | |
| | Tracy Brown | | |

Student Trustee Non-Binding Vote:

| Yes | No | Absent | Abstain |
|-----|-----------------------------|--------|---------|
| | Kayla Hoare | | |
| | Nitishan Poopalasundaram | | |
| | Shampavi Vijayakumar | | |

(b) Naming of the Unnamed Ajax Coughlan Public School

Superintendent Lauren Bliss provided an overview of the report which outlines the process undertaken towards naming of the new Unnamed Ajax Coughlan Public School. The process took place in accordance with the Naming of Schools Policy and Procedure and included the establishment of a Naming Committee and a community consultation to receive proposals. The naming Committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that the name of the new school be Trillium Woods Public School, a name which aligns with the criteria established in the Naming of Schools Policy.

Trustee questions were answered.

2025:RB31

MOVED by Trustee Donna Edwards

SECONDED by Trustee Christine Thatcher

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES SELECT THE RECOMMENDED NAME AS DETERMINED BY THE NAMING COMMITTEE, TRILLIUM WOODS PUBLIC SCHOOL, AS THE OFFICIAL NAME OF THE NEW UNNAMED AJAX COUGHLAN PUBLIC SCHOOL IN AJAX, ONTARIO.

CARRIED

(c) Items Removed from the List of Consent Items

There were no items removed from the consent list.

11. Information Items

(a) Memo 2425:77, Special Education Class – Gifted 2025-2026

Discussion took place and trustee questions were answered. Some trustees expressed concern with the implementation of randomized selection lottery being implemented for the 2025-2026 school year gifted classroom placements.

2025:RB32

MOVED by Trustee Emma Cunningham

SECONDED by Trustee Carolyn Morton

THAT STAFF PREPARE A REPORT OUTLINING THE AVAILABLE OPTIONS IN TERMS OF WHAT TRUSTEES CAN DO WITH RESPECT TO GIFTED CLASSROOM PLACEMENT CONSIDERING THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PLACE AT THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD.

2025:RB33

MOVED by Trustee Donna Edwards

SECONDED by Trustee Stephen Linton

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THAT THE ORIGINAL MOTION BE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

THAT STAFF PREPARE A REPORT OUTLINING THE AVAILABLE OPTIONS IN TERMS OF WHAT TRUSTEES CAN DO WITH RESPECT TO **THE RANDOM SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE GIFTED CLASSROOM PLACEMENT** CONSIDERING THE **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE EDUCATION ACT** AND **THE POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PLACE AT THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD AND THAT THE REPORT BE PROVIDED AT THE JUNE 2, 2025 STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING.**

CARRIED

2025:RB34

MOVED by Trustee Emma Cunningham

SECONDED by Trustee Carolyn Morton

THAT STAFF PREPARE A REPORT OUTLINING THE AVAILABLE OPTIONS IN TERMS OF WHAT TRUSTEES CAN DO WITH RESPECT TO THE RANDOM SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE GIFTED CLASSROOM PLACEMENT CONSIDERING THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE EDUCATION ACT AND THE POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PLACE AT THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD AND THAT THE REPORT BE PROVIDED AT THE JUNE 2, 2025 STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING.

CARRIED

Further discussion took place and additional trustee questions were answered.

2025:RB35

MOVED by Trustee Donna Edwards

SECONDED by Trustee Deb Oldfield

THAT STAFF PREPARE A REPORT ON GRADUATION RATES, PATHWAYS AND CREDIT ACCUMULATION OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS FOR STUDENTS WHO PARTAKE OF ISS SERVICES IN REGULAR CLASS, SELF CONTAINED CLASSES, AND IN SPECIALIZED OR ALTERNATE PROGRAMS (I.E., SAL, DASS, ETC.) TO HELP THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONITOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND PROVIDE INPUT INTO NEXT YEAR'S BOARD ACTION PLAN.

CARRIED

2025:RB36

MOVED by Trustee Shailene Panylo

SECONDED by Trustee Emma Cunningham

THAT THE BOARD REFER TO THE GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE AND ASK TO REVIEW AND UPDATE OUR POLICIES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND THE SEEKING OF FEEDBACK THAT HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON SCHOOL

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COMMUNITY PROGRAMS. IT SHOULD ALIGN WITH OUR STRATEGIC PLAN'S GOALS, PRIORITIZING FULSOME, ADEQUATE FEEDBACK AND PARTICIPATION, AND ALLOW FOR INNOVATIVE WAYS OF CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY. A REPORT SHOULD BE PRESENTED BACK BY NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 2025.

CARRIED

- (b) Report: Approved February 26, 2025 Governance and Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Trustee Kelly Miller shared the minutes of the February 26, 2025 Governance and Policy Committee meeting.

There were no trustee questions.

- (c) Report: Approved April 3, 2025 Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Trustee Donna Edwards shared the minutes and highlights of discussion that took place at the April 3, 2025 SEAC meeting.

There were no trustee questions.

- (d) OPSBA Update

Trustee Donna Edwards reminded trustees of the upcoming OPSBA Annual General Meeting taking place June 12 – 14 and noted that nominations for the positions to be elected at the Annual General Meeting have now closed

There were no trustee questions.

12. Memos

- (a) 2425:76, Trustee Expense Policy

The memo was shared for information. There were no trustee questions.

13. Dates of Significance

The dates of significance were shared for information.

14. Adjournment

2025:RB37

MOVED by Trustee Christine Thatcher

SECONDED by Trustee Mark Jacula

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THAT THE MEETING DOES NOW ADJOURN.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:38 p.m.



Chair



Secretary