



Creation of an Indigenous Student Trustee Position

To: Program and School Services Committee

Date: 3 October, 2019

Report No.: 10-19-3749

Strategic Directions

- Transform Student Learning
- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

Recommendation

It is recommended that the creation of the position of Indigenous Student Trustee of the Board, as described below, be approved.

Background

At its May 1, 2019 meeting, the Program and School Services Committee (PSSC) considered a report from the Urban Indigenous Education Community Advisory Committee (UIECAC) recommending that a dedicated Student Trustee position be established to represent Indigenous student voice on the Board and advocate for the needs of Indigenous students across the system.

As a result, the Committee voted to recommend, “That the Director present a report to the June 4, 2019 Program and School Services Committee meeting on the feasibility of creating a position of Indigenous Student Trustee for the 2019-20 school year.” This recommendation was approved by the Board on May 22, 2019.

Context

Under Ontario Regulation 7/07, Section 55 of the Education Act, school boards have the discretion to establish up to three student trustee positions. In approving this recommendation to create an Indigenous Student Trustee position, the Board will be supporting the ***Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015)***, ***Recommendations 62 and 63***, and taking an important step towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada.

In order for the Board to continue improving the learning opportunities and well-being of Indigenous students across the system, it is immensely important to provide platforms that centre the voices of Indigenous youth. The addition of an Indigenous Student Trustee will provide Indigenous students, families and communities with representation at the highest level of the Toronto District School Board. This step will also contribute to improved Board decision-making by raising Trustees' awareness, understanding and sensitivity to the challenges faced by Indigenous students in our schools.

In establishing an Indigenous Student Trustee position, TDSB would join other Ontario boards, including Thames Valley, Lambton-Kent and the District School Board Ontario East, which have done so.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Consistent with the principles of self-governance and sovereignty as articulated by the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015)*, the election process for the position of Indigenous Student Trustee will be overseen by the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Committee according to Indigenous traditions and ways of knowing and being.

The new, duly-elected Indigenous Student Trustee will assume their place on the Board at the Organizational Board Meeting on November 18, 2019.

Resource Implications

N/A

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

- Operational Procedure PR.588, Student Trustees

From

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Our Mission

To enable all students to reach high levels of achievement and well-being and to acquire the knowledge, skills and values they need to become responsible, contributing members of a democratic and sustainable society.

We Value

- Each and every student's interests, strengths, passions, identities and needs
- A strong public education system
- A partnership of students, staff, family and community
- Shared leadership that builds trust, supports effective practices and enhances high expectations
- The diversity of our students, staff and our community
- The commitment and skills of our staff
- Equity, innovation, accountability and accessibility
- Learning and working spaces that are inclusive, caring, safe, respectful and environmentally sustainable

Our Goals

Transform Student Learning

We will have high expectations for all students and provide positive, supportive learning environments. On a foundation of literacy and math, students will deal with issues such as environmental sustainability, poverty and social justice to develop compassion, empathy and problem solving skills. Students will develop an understanding of technology and the ability to build healthy relationships.

Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being

We will build positive school cultures and workplaces where mental health and well-being is a priority for all staff and students. Teachers will be provided with professional learning opportunities and the tools necessary to effectively support students, schools and communities.

Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

We will ensure that all schools offer a wide range of programming that reflects the voices, choices, abilities, identities and experiences of students. We will continually review policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they promote equity, inclusion and human rights practices and enhance learning opportunities for all students.

Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs

We will allocate resources, renew schools, improve services and remove barriers and biases to support student achievement and accommodate the different needs of students, staff and the community.

Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

We will strengthen relationships and continue to build partnerships among students, staff, families and communities that support student needs and improve learning and well-being. We will continue to create an environment where every voice is welcomed and has influence.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe (A NISH NA BEE), the Haudenosaunee (HOE DENA SHOW NEE) Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognize the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

Reconnaissance des terres traditionnelles

Nous reconnaissons que nous sommes accueillis sur les terres des Mississaugas des Anichinabés (A NISH NA BAY), de la Confédération Haudenosaunee (HOE DENA SHOW NEE) et du Wendat. Nous voulons également reconnaître la pérennité de la présence des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuit."

Committee Mandate

The Program and School Services Committee's mandate will be to consider and make recommendations to the Board on education matters referred to it for consideration, including matters presented by the Board's Community Advisory Committees.