

Trustee Robin Pilkey
Ward 7 Virtual Forum: Equity
Tuesday January 19, 2021 7-9 pm
Minutes

- The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Trustee Robin Pilkey
 - Trustee Pilkey introduced our guest speakers; TDSB Equity Coaches jamie berrigan and Shayle Graham.
 - The [Land Acknowledgement](#) was given
 - Introductions of TDSB staff:
 - Christy Heath, TDSB Shared Service Liaison will be hosting the meeting and taking minutes
 - Superintendent Erin Altosaar of Learning Network 20
 - Superintendent Debbie Donsky sends her regrets as she is attending a School Council meeting at Ursula Franklin Academy
 - Executive Superintendent [Sandy Spyropoulos](#) of Learning Centre 4

- Advisory Committee Updates:
 - [Parent Involvement Advisory Committee \(PIAC\)](#) Ward 7 Representative Alice Romo alice.e.romo@gmail.com
 - PIAC's mandate is to support parents and parent engagement, to support [parent councils](#) and through this to support student achievement and engagement.
 - We are under the [Parent and Community Engagement Office](#)
 - By this time all School Councils should have a Zoom account
 - [School Messenger](#) will be available to Parent Councils by the end of January. School Messenger will allow Parent Councils to email parents enmass without having to have individual email addresses.
 - [School Statement of Needs \(SSON\)](#) were due in November but if you have not submitted yet, you still can.
 - A survey was done of School Councils. 400 responses were received, of those 21 Schools have not yet had elections for the 2020/2021 School year and 13 schools did not have active Councils.
 - Robin Pilkey added; PIAC has a large role in organizing the [Parents as Partners Conference](#). They also have a role in advising the TDSB in the distribution of the [Parents Reaching Out \(PRO\) Grants](#) which the Government of Ontario changed to block grant to school boards versus the previous individual school applications.
 - [French as a Second Language Advisory Committee \(FSLAC\)](#) Ward 7 Representative Mandy Moore mandyjmoore@gmail.com

- <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/School-Choices/French-Programs>
 - We support [Core French](#) as well as [French Immersion Programs](#)
 - There was recently a [French Program Review](#) and recommendations are being implemented from that including the phase out of Extended French and the implementation of Junior Kindergarten French Immersion.
 - TDSB will be investing in professional development for french teachers
 - Go [here](#) for information on applying to French Programs. Middle French Immersion Application Deadline is January 29th.
- [Equity Presentation](#): TDSB Equity Coaches Shayle Graham and jamie berrigan
 - TDSB Equity Coaches work across the Board in areas of equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression
 - Relevant Links:
 - <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Leadership/Boardroom/Multi-Year-Strategic-Plan>
 - <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Equity>
 - <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Media/News/ArtMID/2750/ArticleID/1475/TDSB-Creates-New-Centre-of-Excellence-for-Black-Student-Achievement>
 - <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/News/Article-Details/ArtMID/474/ArticleID/1473/Talking-about-Race-and-Racism-With-Children>
 - Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in Schools
<http://ppf.tdsb.on.ca/uploads/files/live/53/2227.pdf>
 - <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/News/Article-Details/ArtMID/474/ArticleID/1579/Statement-by-Chair-Alexander-Brown-on-Events-in-Washington-DC>
- Q & A:
 - Q: Could some of the Principals who are here speak to how you share your equity goals with our school community?
 - **A: Superintendent Erin Altosaar:** When we are working with schools on our [School Improvement Plans](#) we don't look at equity and achievement in isolation, we look at where they converge. We also look at the changes we are making and how we see them playing out, then we look at what happened, did they work? Did they not work? And, we look at the data (census and community consultation). What is the data saying and what are your conclusions based on the data.
 - **Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos :** We look deeply at the data and desegregate with the parents, to hear their voices as well as the students and staff. We look to see who is underserved, who are underachieving and who are getting suspensions disproportionately, who

are students with Individual Education Plans? With this data, the goals are more intentional.

- **Julie Ardell, Principal Parkdale CI:** We are open about sharing with families, everything that is happening in the school. What professional development is happening with staff in terms of anti-oppression and equity. Letting families know this is on-going. We keep an open dialogue with the Superintendent and really it's about keeping lines of communication open.
 - **Debra Muchnik, Vice Principal Parkdale CI:** We are focusing on starting with the administrative staff. Looking at our practices and processes and looking at who is being underserved, who is being sent to the office. Working with our staff and sharing with our parents.
 - **Esme Mckenzie, Principal Howard Jr. Public School:** We focus on the Window Paradigm that was mentioned in the presentation. We look at other opportunities or other peoples experiences that are different from our own. We also value communication. We share information with our School Council and ask for feedback on policy and process. We share our School Improvement Plan and try to make it less jargony and break it down for understanding. We have a passionate group of parents on council who want to work together.
- Q: For Shayle and Jame; What is the difference between SEPA, Student Equity Program Advisory and Equity Coach?
 - A: **Jamie Berrigan:** SEPA works directly with the students and Equity Coaches work primarily with educators.
 - Q: What steps are being taken to ensure more equal and proportional representation in the gifted programs?
 - A: **Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos** : A few years ago we introduced [Universal Screening](#) in grade 3.
 - **Trustee Robin Pilkey:** This screening is done in grade 3. It used to be that teachers would identify students they thought might be gifted and have them tested, which introduces a bias into the process. The Universal Screening tests every Grade 3 Student.
 - **Sandy Spyropoulos** : However, Universal Screening has missed the mark so far on what we wanted to accomplish. We are still not seeing black, racialized and Indigenous students in the gifted programs. So, we are reviewing the process and coming up with better strategies to go forward.
 - Q: How are Principals and Superintendents addressing the issue of teachers and educators being resistant to professional development in the areas of anti-black racism?
 - A: **Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos** : If you have a chance to look at the mandate for the Centre for [Black Student Achievement](#), along with Jamie and Shayle, there are other Equity

Coaches focused on professional learning around anti-black racism. We currently have mandatory training for administrators with the expectation that they will engage their staff in similar training. There is no opt-out of this training.

- **Julie Ardell, Principal Parkdale CI:** Our staff of 35 is very open to the topic of anti-black racism. We had a staff meeting today and addressed the use of the N word in the school. We are able to have very open conversations. We have made racism a standing topic at our staff meetings, creating a positive culture within the school.
 - **Charles Pendleton, Principal Swansea Public School:** One of the tasks we are undertaking at Swansea is to go into classes and do some instructional leadership. We will be doing read aloud about anti-black racism with kindergarten through grade 8 students. We also do a book club within our staff meetings tackling anti-black racism and being able to unpack it through literature. We also hold our staff to very high expectations in following TDSB policy and doing what is needed for our students.
- Q: What is being done in Virtual School on this same topic?
 - A: **Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos** : In Virtual School, we are doing everything that we have talked about here. We are making sure that the instructional practices are anti-oppressive and culturally responsive.
 - Q: What kind of plans are in place to address learning losses during remote learning?
 - A: **Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos** : We are collecting data on our reading scores, particularly for our youngest students and we have the report card data from both bricks and mortar and virtual school. We first aim to understand the gaps. Then we will unpack the data with our Superintendents and Principals. Then we will use what we know from best practices particularly around reading interventions. We are looking ahead to what summer school will look like and focusing on credit rescue and credit recovery in high school. We need to put in place strategies that close the gaps. We also have many supports around [mental health](#). Social workers are working to provide resources to teachers and students. There will be a survey sent out to students next week looking at engagement.
 - Q: Can Jamie and Shayle talk about student organized anti-racism and equity action?
 - A: **Jamie, TDSB Equity Coach:** it begins with what students are looking for and having staff to support. It starts with students and you can help by connecting them with educators who can support the conversations.
 - **Charles Pendleton, Principal Swansea PS:** Our new Social Justice Committee is splitting into subcommittees so students can focus on what

they are particularly interested in. It is also important that every student has an adult at the school they can talk to.

- Trustee Robin Pilkey thanked everyone for attending and Shayle and Jamie for presenting
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm