



Anti-Black Racism and Black Excellence Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 21st, 2023 | 6:30 p.m. | North Boardroom, 650 Rossland Rd. West, Oshawa

Attendees: Shauna Bookal – Chair, Jamaal Lawrence – Vice Chair, Kayode Akomolafe – Human Rights and Equity Advisor, Katharine Stevenson – Superintendent of Education, Brenda Rocha – Committee Secretary, Lara Awoleye, Jemi Smith, Auguste Deonarine, Alexa Rodney, Phil Johnson, Hannah Kent, Janelle Benjamin, Anissa Voisin, Tanika Riley, Trevor Aitcheson, Nicole Cyrus.

TIME	ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION	OWNER
6:30pm	Land Acknowledgement	Executive Member
6:35pm	Opening Prayer	Executive Member
6:40pm	Welcome Remarks Emails will be used for communication and information sharing among members. The possibility of a dedicated DCDSB email account for committee members will be considered by the school board.	Chair Bookal
6:45pm	Equity Invitational Learning Event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first session of the Equity Invitational Series holds this Thursday at 6:00pm at the Pope Francis Center. A reminder will be sent to committee members and registered attendees. Only people who registered to attend virtually will receive the Zoom link. Participants who attend in person will be eligible to win door prizes. The goal of the learning series is to develop strategies for achieving measurable and sustainable change in the work to remove systemic barriers experienced by Black students, staff, and families. The event will feature keynote speaker followed by a Q&A session. Individuals who did not register to attend virtually before the deadline for registration will still have an opportunity to attend but only in person. Participants will be informed at the start of the event that the session will be recorded. People who do not wish to be recorded will be advised to turn off their cameras. However, the Q&A session will not be recorded. Support from the committee for setup was enthusiastically approved. <p>ACTION: Brenda to send out one more email reminder tomorrow encouraging people to attend in person. She will send the Zoom link to only those who registered to attend virtually.</p>	Kayode Akomolafe

7:05pm	<p>African Land Acknowledgment:</p> <p>Anissa who requested the use of African Land Acknowledgment at committee meetings wasn't present to discuss the request. It was determined that the matter will be brought up for consideration at the following committee meeting, Members were advised that a conversation is required before a decision is made regarding the African Land Acknowledgment's inclusion at the Equity Invitational Learning events.</p>	Chair Bookal
7:15pm	<p>Systems Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kayode apologized for the communication gap that occurred regarding the committee's meeting in October, which resulted in some members not attending that meeting. Some members' names were omitted from the committee's distribution list, so they did not receive the emails. This has been rectified. • The Black Heritage and Excellence Celebration Committee (BHECC) was created by the Board to further the effort to combat anti-Black racism. This committee gives the board's Black employees a platform to share their lived experience of discrimination and to provide support for one another in addressing anti-Black racism in the board. The committee is made up of Black and non-Black employees. • Within BHECC, there is an employee resource group known as Networking and Representation Subcommittee for Black employees only. This provides a safe environment in which employees with shared or similar lived experience may support one another. BHECC is planning events for Black History Month Black Mental Health Day. Further details will be provided on BHECC's work. • Members encouraged a collaboration between this committee and the BHECC to tackle anti-Black racism and mutual support at both committee's events. It was clarified that the ABR & BE is parent-led while the BHECC is staff-led. • A joint meeting of the ABR & BE and BHECC for information sharing on each other's activities was proposed for this committee's February 20th meeting. • Members were shown the board's Human Rights, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Discrimination webpage which contains information regarding the board's work in these areas. Information on the webpage includes the board's strategic priorities, annual goals, and timelines for achieving them. The goals will be reviewed at the set times to measure performance. • TAIBU organizes the Black Mental Health Week in March in collaboration with the City of Toronto. To benefit from available resources, members were encouraged to present ideas from these committees for TAIBU's consideration. The goal is to collaborate. 	Kayode Akomolafe, Katharine Stevenson

7:40pm	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Sharing – The board will endeavor to provide the committee with high-level information on significant concerns pertaining to relevant issues in schools. For confidentiality, such information will not include specifics, particularly for active situations. Where possible, more information may be provided when a matter is concluded. • Attendance at meetings – Attendance is open to everybody. Community members who are not committee executives are still welcome to attend meetings, but only executive members can vote on any matter. • Parents’ Emails and Database – This is an advisory committee and does not communicate on behalf of the board. The school board is responsible for communication. Emails from this committee to the community will not be sent from personal accounts. They will originate from the board. The board will ensure that emails to members are always sent as blind copies (bcc) due to privacy concerns. • Northern Municipalities Parent Area Representative – The sole candidate for this position expressed their readiness to take on the role although they were absent at the election. They had not received prior emails regarding the election date. The member was present at today’s meeting and was introduced as Nicole Cyrus. She was affirmed as the Parent Area Representative for the Northern Municipalities of Uxbridge, Beaverton, and Port Perry. • Parent Area Representatives Responsibilities – Parent Area Representatives are required to familiarize themselves with their role as set out in the committee’s Terms of Reference. Their responsibilities include sharing information about the committee’s activities and programs with their communities and within their networks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are also expected to bring to the attention of the committee any issues that they may become aware of regarding schools in their communities. • Parent Area Representatives cannot speak for the committee or make decisions on its behalf. • They are voting members of the committee. • The names of the Parent Area Representatives were communicated to the school principals and vice principals. • Members were reminded that the committee being a board committee is required to comply with relevant board guidelines regarding board committees. • Issues relating to communication, email design etc. will be handled by the board’s Communications Department. <p>ACTION: The inquiry as to whether Parent Area Representatives could introduce themselves to PVPs at the next Director’s meeting will be brought to the Director’s attention.</p>	Chair Bookal
8:10pm	Closing Prayer & Adjournment	Executive Member