

**TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2022**

Public Session: 5:30 p.m. (Virtual Meeting)

## **AGENDA**

### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

### **B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

### **C. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **D. NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Serving Multi-Language Learners and Families in DSBN Update**  
[M. Reimer Friesen, Melanie Sendzik](#)
2. **CORE (Community Orientation Re-Engagement) Unit Update**  
[A. Gilmore](#)
3. **Toolkit for Supporting Students who have Experienced Sexual Violence Update**  
[M. St. John](#)
4. **Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol Update**  
[M. St. John](#)

### **E. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **F. ADJOURNMENT**

### **G. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.**

March 1, 2022

## **SERVING MULTI-LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND FAMILIES IN DSBN UPDATE**

### **BACKGROUND**

The pandemic as well as intensified efforts to ensure anti-bias and anti-oppressive practices in education have created opportunities to reflect on and implement improved ways of serving multi-language students and their families in DSBN.

### **SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

#### **A. RECEPTION PROCESS**

The Welcome Centre has processed documentation for over 1,500 students since March 2020. With the closure of the physical office, we had to adjust our structures and processes. Since our last update to trustees, DSBN has:

- a) Consolidated the Welcome Centre and International Education offices. Previously the Welcome Centre was closed in the afternoons and summer. By consolidating personnel and resources into one office, we are now able to support newcomer families 5 days a week for 12 months of the year.
- b) Collected family information via telephone/email to prepare appropriate verification forms for registration. This means families will not always be required to travel to the physical Welcome Centre once it reopens if transportation is a barrier. Newcomer/multi-language families will almost always be able to register directly at the school like all other families.
- c) Removed the practice of sending elementary multi-language learners to 'site schools' across the district. They now register at their home school which supports neighbourhood friendships, increased family involvement, and reduced transportation costs. Secondary students early in their English language learning journey continue to attend site schools to ensure they have access to specially designed, credit bearing, ESL courses that form a pathway to senior English courses and the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

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- d) Added a half time 'Community and Inclusion' Social Worker to support students and families upon reception based on information gathered during the process, such as traumatic experiences and settlement or cultural support requests.
- e) Deepened our relationship with the SWIS team to ensure that they are aware of and able to provide additional support to families with these revised processes. As a result, they have added 2 new 'Mental Health Navigators' to their team who work with families from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences to help them understand and appreciate the mental health supports in DSBN.

### **B. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

- a) Students and families are being encouraged to maintain their additional languages because this benefits achievement and well-being. To support and encourage this, we now refer to students with additional languages as MLs (**M**ulti-language **L**earners) rather than as 'ELLs' (**E**nglish **L**anguage **L**earners). This additionally supports those families who choose French Immersion.
- b) In Elementary, Multi-language Resource Coaches (MRCs, formerly ESL Itinerants) not only support students with acquiring the language of instruction, but they also co-plan and co-teach with their educator colleagues so that daily instruction reflects the needs of these learners. Our secondary MLs are also supported by ESL Itinerant Teachers and ESL course teachers.
- c) A pilot program was initiated in Fall to allow Grade 7 & 8 MLs access to a device daily at school and at home allowing for software access including translation tools (Google and Microsoft Immersive Reader) and Microsoft TEAMS. In the coming weeks, we will be expanding the pilot to include students in Grades 3-6 who are early in their English language learning journey. We are already seeing many tangible ways in which this will enhance student achievement and well-being.

We look forward to continuing to reflect on and innovate our practices for serving multi-lingual students and their families.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Serving Multi-Language Learners and Families in DSBN Update be received.

Submitted by

Marian Reimer Friesen, Superintendent – Curriculum and Student Achievement (K-8)

March 1, 2022

## **COMMUNITY ORIENTATION RE-ENGAGEMENT (CORE) UNIT**

### **BACKGROUND**

In early November, the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) submitted a proposal to create a Community Engagement Division that would incorporate the 8 School Resource Officers (SROs) and operate on a regional basis. They communicated that the emphasis would be on community issues including youth, with a focus on prevention and education. DSBN expressed support for a re-framing of the SRO program with continued collaboration and input from our stakeholders (Principals, Student Senate, Trustees, School Councils).

### **SUMMARY**

NRPS Superintendent Marco Gianicco provided an update on the NRPS's new proposal to the Community Safety Police Grant. In response to feedback from schools, the SRO Program is being replaced with a pilot program titled: Community Orientation Re-Engagement (CORE) Unit. This pilot program is set to launch on April 1, 2022. DSBN will be invited to attend an orientation meeting for external partners. We are looking forward to working alongside NRPS in defining both the vision and mission of the CORE Unit, and the role of the officers in supporting students. DSBN will also continue to seek input from our stakeholders mentioned above.

In seeking clarification on how CORE and the SRO program will differ, the following information was provided:

- CORE will continue to provide administrators with support from an officer without schools having to make a formal police report. This provides low risk access to police services to administrators, as well as to students and parents who request that support.
- CORE officers will continue to receive training specific to working with youth.
- Unlike the SRO program, CORE officers will not be assigned to individual schools. Officers will only visit a school when invited by an administrator.
- CORE officers will be assigned to a district, and will work both day and afternoon shifts, as their focus on youth will encompass the community at large, and not just schools.

As this is a pilot program, DSBN will create opportunities to collect feedback and then work collaboratively with the NRPS to refine the program before it moves out of the pilot stage and into a formal partnership. We will also equip our administrators with guidance on how and when to contact CORE officers to ensure equitable access and positive experiences with this revised partnership.

Submitted by Ann Gilmore, Superintendent of Curriculum and Student Achievement (9-12)

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Community Orientation Re-Engagement (CORE) Unit report be received.

## **TOOLKIT FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

Tuesday, March 1, 2022

### **BACKGROUND**

In the fall of 2021, there were allegations of numerous sexual assaults at Ontario universities, and subsequent student walkouts. Concurrently, DSBN secondary administrators noted an increase in the number of students who were reporting incidents of sexual violence perpetrated by their peers, and students speaking out about the desire for support to prevent and address sexual violence at school.

A Toolkit has been developed by the DSBN's Mental Health & Well-Being Team, with the goal of providing consistent, accessible, evidence-based direction and support to students, staff, and administrators in understanding, preventing, and supporting members of school communities who have been impacted by sexual violence. The content of the Toolkit was adapted from materials available through Western University's Academic Director of the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children. Secondary superintendents, secondary administrators, school social workers, and the board legal team were also involved in reviewing and contributing to the Toolkit.

### **SUMMARY**

The Toolkit is comprised of several sections. The first section provides background information and education on concepts related to sexual violence: definitions and relevant statistics, information on consent, the impact of sexual violence, common myths and stereotypes, and on receiving a disclosure and barriers to disclosure.

The second section provides concrete, specific guidance to students, staff, and school administrators on what to do when sexual violence occurs. For students, the emphasis is on telling a trusted support person and promoting awareness around the various options for disclosing or reporting sexual violence. Staff members are provided with tips and strategies around how to receive a disclosure in a manner that is supportive to the student, while ensuring that essential board policies and procedures are followed. Staff are also given guidance on accommodating the learning needs of students impacted by sexual violence, and on preventing sexual violence through education. For school administrators, specific policies and procedures around mandatory reporting to police and child protection services, and on school investigations and student discipline, are outlined in detail.

The third section provides information about how to access the various professional supports for sexual violence that are available at DSBN schools and in the Niagara Region. These include mental health services, medical care, and emergency shelters and housing. Lists of further resources and references are also included.

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The Toolkit has been finalized and will be printed and provided to all school administrators. A digital version will be available on the Staff Portal. School administrators have access to a slide deck of the most pertinent content for staff, to present at upcoming staff meetings. Information that is relevant to students and their parents will be available on the Safe Schools section of the DSBN's public website.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the March 1, 2022 Toolkit For Supporting Students Who Have Experienced Sexual Violence Update be received.

Respectfully submitted by:

Michael St. John, Superintendent of Special Education and Mental Health & Well-Being

## **ANTI-SEX TRAFFICKING PROTOCOL**

Tuesday, March 1, 2022

### **BACKGROUND**

Human trafficking is one of the fastest growing crimes worldwide, with Ontario currently having the highest number of police-reported incidents in Canada. Most cases of human trafficking in Ontario involve sexual exploitation, referred to as sex trafficking. Vulnerable students are prime targets for traffickers; with 13 being the average age of recruitment into sex trafficking in Canada. Pursuant to Ontario's Human Trafficking Strategy 2020-2025, the policy framework outlined in PPM 166, issued July 6, 2021, sets clear standards for school boards to establish and follow a protocol for preventing and responding to suspected student sex trafficking occurrences. Consistent with this framework, in November 2021, the DSBN Board of Trustees approved Policy G-09 Anti-Sex Trafficking: Keeping Students Safe. The DSBN values the safety and well-being of children and youth and is committed to complementing the work that already occurs in schools through our partnership with the Niagara Sexual Assault Centre, by collaborating with other sectors and community partners to develop an Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol to safeguard and increase awareness for staff, students, families, and communities.

### **SUMMARY**

The Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol has clearly articulated roles, responsibilities, and accountability measures. It also addresses threats associated with digital technology and the internet. The core and essential elements of the protocol are: 1. Statement of principles; 2. Strategies to raise awareness and prevent sex trafficking; 3. Response procedures; 4. Training for school board employees; and 5. Measuring success: accountability and evaluation.

The DSBN has partnered with the Executive Director of Collaborative Community Solutions to support in the development of a comprehensive protocol, including consultation processes, development of staff training, and a sustainability plan that includes pathways for tracking and reviewing data. The consultant has a deep understanding and knowledge of human trafficking, with 15 years of work experience at local non-profit agencies, including her role as the Director of Policy and Advocacy at YWCA Niagara Region, and through her own lived experience. She has delivered training to a variety of local organizations and led the development of Niagara's Anti-Human Trafficking Emergency Response Protocol.

The Protocol development involves a multi-sector approach, including ongoing consultation and engagement with community agencies and organizations that support school communities. The input and partnership of a variety of stakeholders is being solicited, including Indigenous organizations, police services, child protection services, services for survivors of sexual violence and exploitation, and local children's mental health and addictions service providers. Representatives from racialized, newcomer, and Francophone communities, as well as individuals with lived experience and survivors of sex

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trafficking, are being invited to join in developing a culturally relevant, sensitive, and equitable approach.

As we continue to work on finalizing our Protocol, we look forward to the consultation process scheduled for Spring 2022. The Protocol will be available for school administrators, staff, community and community partners.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the March 1, 2022 Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol Update be received.

Respectfully submitted by:

Michael St. John, Superintendent of Special Education and Mental Health & Well-Being