

Equity Advisory Circle Meeting Notes

Wednesday, April, 9, 2025 at 9:30 AM.
Zoom and in-person in North Bay Boardroom

Present:

Melanie Gray, Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
Tim Graves, Superintendent of Education
Lisa Lamoureux, Principal of Student Well-being, and Equity
Erin Plourde, Canadore College Community Inclusion Coordinator
Niki Hutchinson, Youth Engagement Lead, North Bay District Health Unit
Marcus Etienne, PIC Chair
Katrina Aguiar, The Drop/Mental Health & Addictions Worker West PS Health Centre
Louise Sargent, Trustee
Margaret Soroye, NNDSB Teacher
Howard Wesley, Trustee
Sujala Niroula, Multi-Cultural Society
Heidi McMillan Executive Assistant

Regrets:

Sandra Zurbrigg, Community Member
Amanda Mathias, Indigenous Education Lead
Alison Clarke, Acting Principal of Special Education
Nathan Moore, CAS Teacher Liaison Youth in Care
Seth Compton, OutLoud North Bay
Lana St. Louis, Mental Health Lead
Deborah Robertson, Multi-Cultural Society
Jeannie Vaillancourt, North Bay Metis Council
Ashley St. Pierre, Education Counsellor Moosedeer Point FN
Lyudmyla Boyko – Multi-Cultural Centre
Kelly Huston, Indigenous Teacher Lead

Land acknowledgment by Principal Lamoureux

Talking Circle – Welcome EAC members

Superintendent Gray welcomed everyone to the meeting and had introductions around the circle.

Near North Equity Update - Principal of Equity and Well-Being -Lisa Lamoureux

- It was a successful day of PD on April 4th, with many of our equity coaches and teachers leading sessions for the PD Day sharing LIFT and Experiential Learning projects focused on Equity, Third Path, UDL and Student Well-being.
- EA's participated in a workshop from Egale focused on building inclusive schools. Regional sessions were held at Parry Sound High, Almaguin, Chippewa, and West Ferris.
- Secondary teachers participated in emotion coaching training with the mental health team, during the morning PD.
- Many teachers presented math and literacy projects at the PD Day.
- Teachers also had grade-level meetings and school team reflections at the end of the day.
- **Student Senate and Indigenous Youth Circle Activities**
- The Student Senate and Indigenous Youth Circle met at Northern on March 19 for relationship building and to collaborate on planning initiatives.

- Activities included icebreaker games, school tours, a lunch prepared by students and staff, and planning for new initiatives.
- The Student Senate organized a secondary spirit day at the end of March, with Almaguin coming in first place for best spirit.
- The April Student Senate meeting is being hosted at the North Bay Parry Sound Health Unit, with a new location each month for student senate meetings.
- **Equity Coaches and Experiential Learning Projects**
- The West Ferris Equity Coach used Planet Youth funding to support the Jack.org group in creating an art piece for their library. The painting represents acceptance and diversity.
- Many schools continue to work on Lift projects focused on The Third Path (Dr. David Tranter) to support the well-being of students.
- April is Autism Awareness Month. Students and staff at Mapleridge School raised the autism flag and have activities planned for students throughout the month.
- Equity resources and events in our community were shared.
- Resources from School Mental Health Ontario were mentioned as beneficial for community members and parents.

Reports/Updates

SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee) – SO Graves

- An update was provided on the SEAC meeting, focusing on emotional coaching and budget recommendations.
- The SEAC mandate includes advising the board on special education issues, with a particular focus on budget recommendations.
- The committee is working on ensuring equity of resources for identified students at all age groups.
- Efforts are being made to make the special education guide for parents more accessible and parent-friendly.

FNAC (First Nations Advisory Committee) - SO GRAY

- **Indigenous Education and Community Engagement**
- Focus on working towards equitable outcomes for Indigenous students with key areas supporting student well-being, transitions and pathways, parent and community engagement, system and educator capacity.
- Acknowledgments of gratitude for the Indigenous Youth Circle, Indigenous Advisory Circle, First Nation Advisory Circle, NNDSB team, knowledge keepers, Elders, Artists and families.
- **Supporting Students**
- Increase student success and well-being through culturally responsive and relevant initiatives.
- The Indigenous Language and Cultural Mentorship Program involves young Indigenous graduates supporting language and culture learning in schools.
- The Seven Stones Program is a partnership with the Near North Indigenous Friendship Center, to support urban Indigenous students in completing OSSD requirements.
- **Supporting Educators**
- Enhance educator's knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture, world view and issues. Spring initiatives include language support, professional development, mentorship program, resource development, strategic planning, LIFT Projects: Walking the Path, The Power of Story, Mathematics.
- **Community Partnerships and Engagement**
- Collaborate with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to build relationships and understanding.
- **KEB Grants:**
- **Dokis First Nation:** "We Will Be There Soon!" grant to enhance Indigenous Youth Spaces, Graduation coach roles, language teachers, transition workers, and mentorship programs.
- **Wasauksing First Nation:** Cultural Coordinator Lisa Ross supports knowledge keeper visits and the upcoming PSHS pow wow.

- **Nipissing First Nation:** Great Lakes Cultural Camp facilitated Deer Hide and Trapping Camps for grade 7 and 8 students.
- **Upcoming Events**
- **Special Days and Pow Wows:**
- May 7th - Chippewa
- May 9th - West Ferris
- May 14th - Almaguin Highlands
- May 28th - Northern Secondary
- May 29th - North Bay Pow Wow (4 Board)
- May 30th - PSHS

PIC (Parent Involvement Committee) SO Gray

- PIC is focusing on reaching out grants and parent input on student achievement and well-being.
- The board is working on extending the five-year mental health and anti-addiction plan for one more year.
- The mental health services are being restructured internally, with child development counselors focusing more on elementary levels and mental health clinicians on secondary levels.
- The board is aligning its mental health services with the Ontario government's collaborative process focusing on core work.

Mental Health Update

- The board is working on extending the five-year mental health addictions plan for one more year.
- The mental health services are being restructured internally, with Child Development Counsellors focusing more on elementary levels and the Mental Health Clinicians focusing on secondary levels.
- The board is aligning its mental health services with the Ontario government's collaborative process focusing on core work.

Trustee Update

- Decision to keep McDougall open with K-6 student population to pause for a year until they move into the new K-12 PS School. For now, we will utilize that location for another year.
- Budget continues to be the focus and hopeful to pass it at the end of June.

Community Agencies Update from our service partners

- **Northeast Multicultural Center** provided updates on a name change, address change, and budget changes for the year. The new location is 373 Main Street West.
- The center plans to conduct 42 activities and workshops for kids and families, open to newcomer families and school referrals.
- **The Drop** remains open 3 times per week. Updates were shared on ongoing activities, including bi-weekly group support, a new autism peer support group, and upcoming fundraisers. May 5th will host an activity where participants can create a mask to help unmask their emotions.
- **North Bay Health Unit** shared updates on a community connection luncheon and student experience day hosting the Student Senate.
- The Planet Youth Grant is helping fund a mental health space at West Ferris and Chippewa Secondary. The Health Unit is hoping to assist with funding for the project.
- Providing ongoing support to schools on student hygiene and energy drink consumption.
- Working with West Ferris on the completion of a sensory path for students.
- **Canadore College** shared updates on the community connection luncheon, revamped to bring in community partners and showcase support services and resources.
- The event aimed to build super teams and foster relationships between community partners and guidance counselors.

- A student experience day was organized for students in care, allowing them to tour campuses, attend a Battalion game, and engage in various activities.
- Upcoming initiatives include a pride day on campus in June to connect high school students with the college pride group and foster friendships.

Group Activity: Collecting feedback for 2025-2026 CRRP Calendar

- **2025-2026 CRR Calendar Feedback**
- The CRR calendar and the survey to collect feedback from staff was reviewed.
- The calendar is now interactive and electronic, making it easier for teachers and staff to access resources.
- The calendar highlights the inclusion of significant days and includes resources and summaries of books to support days of significance, and it is emailed to staff at the beginning of each month.
- The importance of having resources that reflect the diversity of students and support equity and well-being was highlighted.
- The Classroom Support Center provides resources to educate students on racism and discrimination when incidents occur.
- The [Calendar](#) and feedback [survey link](#) will be shared with staff.

Next EAC date: June 19, 2025