

Student Senate Newsletter - March Recap

The [Student Senate](#) represents students' views to the OCDSB, meeting once per month to discuss key issues. There are two Student Senators at each secondary school; if you have any questions, reach out to them!

March 7th Meeting Recap:

- Incoming Student Trustees
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Spotlight Proposal
- Celebrations Inclusivity Policy Proposal
- Revising Senate Policies
- Student Trustees' Updates

Incoming Student Trustees

Sharanya Sivasathiyanathan:

- Current Co-Chair of the Co-Presidents Council
- Current Grade 11 at John McCrae SS
- Focus on promoting mental health awareness and advocating for equitable youth representation in decision-making processes

Ezio de Stefano:

- Indigenous Student Trustee (Urban Inuk)
- Current Grade 11 at John McCrae SS
- Focus on ensuring Indigenous students feel they have a voice in the matters that affect their day to day lives in school, and make sure that Indigenous students' needs are being met suitably

Jeffrey Zhang:

- Current Student Senator
- Grade 11 at Earl of March SS
- Focus on better understanding and questioning practices while actively including student voices from all secondary schools

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Spotlight Proposal

OCDSB EDI Spotlight is an initiative by the 2023-24 Student Senate EDI sub-committee that "spotlights" specific OCDSB students that are implementing equity, diversity, and inclusion in their respective communities! Instagram posts will be put out at the end of each month highlighting student contributions to EDI. Through highlighting student achievement, we hope to encourage other students to take action in fostering EDI within their schools! Do you know someone who's making an impact? Nominate them using this [Google Form](#).

Policy Celebrations Inclusivity Proposal

The Senate's Policy Sub-Committee proposed the Inclusivity Adjustment project, which aims to ensure that cultural and religious observances ([OCDSB Religious/Creed-Based Days of Observance](#)) are equally celebrated and accessible in all schools in the OCDSB. The Senate will work with students and board staff on a school-by-school basis to create an environment where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued.

Revising Senate Policies

The Senate discussed certain policy changes that took place this year, including the addition of a Junior Student Senator position for each school and two-year terms for Senators elected in Grade 9 or Grade 11. Most Senators were in favour of the changes. We also discussed moving the deadline of the Senior Senator elections to the fall, while still encouraging schools to hold them the previous spring.

Student Trustees' Updates

Menstrual Equity Motion

Student Trustee Emma Hong proposed a motion at Committee of the Whole requesting a letter be sent on behalf of the school board to the Ministry of Education in support of continued provision of menstrual products in response to the expiry of the original deal set forth by the Ministry and Shoppers Drug Mart three years ago. The motion was unanimously supported by the Board of Trustees, and has been approved at the March 26th Board Meeting. More details can be found in [this OCDSB meeting recording](#).

Delegations on introducing an Arabic Equity Coach

Several community members attended the March 19th COW meeting to advocate for the creation of an Arabic Equity Coach, as a high proportion of the OCDSB's student body is Arab and there is a distinct need for support among families and students districtwide. In deliberations, Student Trustee Malaika Kamanzi provided introduction to a motion moved by Trustee Aziz in supporting the request of the community delegates by amending the academic staffing plan to reflect a commitment to the provision of two staff resources to support Palestinian, Muslim, Arab, and/or Arab-speaking students. Both Student Trustees voted in favour in a recorded vote on this motion. More details can be found in the [OCDSB meeting recording](#) (around the 2 hr 43 minute mark).

Previous Recaps: [February 2024](#)