

DATE: October 22, 2019

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Student Senate 2019-2020 Work Plan

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Marnie Beaudoin, Sean Jones, Nancy Petersen

REFERENCE: [October 4, 2016, Board Report – Strategic Plan Update: Student Senate 2016-17 Work Plan](#)

ISSUE

The Student Senate is presenting their work plan for the 2019-2020 school year to the Board of Trustees.

BACKGROUND

The Student Senate serves as a youth engagement model to promote active student participation in youth governance within education and to provide the Board of Trustees with a meaningful way to access student voice. To help focus the direction and energy of the Student Senate, they establish a yearly work plan informed by the voice of their peers. The Student Senate reports on their efforts to meet their work plan goals at three public Board meetings throughout the year.

In the spring of 2019, Edmonton Public high schools selected up to two students per high school to provide representation on a 2019-2020 Student Senate. The 2019-2020 Student Senators met with the 2018-2019 Student Senate on June 11, 2019, to ensure transition between the two groups of students. The 2019-2020 Student Senate met on September 11 and October 9, 2019, to complete the following tasks:

- elect three Student Trustees: Josh Karathra, Johanna Lau, Tristin Odnokon
- elect four Student Senate Executives: Chair Cindy Liu, Vice Chair Rajan Maghera, and Secretaries Hamza Khan and Raj Singh
- identify the topic for a youth engagement event

CURRENT SITUATION

For the previous three years, Student Senators have gathered student input on the question, “What are the most important issues related to education and school for students today?” The material was then themed and Student Senators selected three topics and based their year’s work around projects related to the three topics.

While this process produced good learning and outcomes, it required a lot of time before topics were narrowed and project work could begin. Therefore, this year, in an effort to allow for more time for actual project work, Student Senators were provided with an overview of the data gathered through

student engagement by the previous three years of Student Senators and given the task of choosing one topic to serve as the theme for a spring symposium.

The data showed that four topics repeatedly were of most interest to students: life skills, mental health, diversity and cohesion, and environment. This year's Students Senators were given these four topics, along with the 16 sub-topics the themed data revealed. Through table conversations and a "dot-mocracy" exercise, they selected their theme.

In the 2019-2020 school year, the Student Senate will also be providing youth perspective to Board and Division initiatives. Throughout the year, the Board and Division administration will be able to access youth voice through the Student Senate about a broad range of topics relevant to high school students.

KEY POINTS

- Student Senators elected three Student Trustees and four executive.
- The Student Senators chose a theme for a youth symposium to be held in spring 2020, based on three years of student answers to the question, "What are the most important issues related to education and school for students today?"
- Student Senators will establish committees to further refine the theme and plan the symposium.
- The Student Senate will provide youth perspective to the Board of Trustees and Division administration about a range of topics throughout the year.
- Student Trustees will report their progress towards their work plan goals at the February 25, 2020 public Board meeting.

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