

BOARD REPORT

REPORT No.: 2024-33

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

SUBJECT: SITUATION ANALYSIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 2024-33 (Chief Executive Officer Division) we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, receive the Situation Analysis Implementation Plan update for information only.

REPORT SUMMARY

To present The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (the Board) with a progress update on the Situation Analysis Implementation Plan.

BACKGROUND

Blue Sky Strategic Group presented the results of their 2021-22 Situation Analysis at the November 2022 Board meeting. Included in this presentation and report were 23 recommendations and a recommended plan for implementation of the recommendations.

A proposed implementation plan was created by Administration to address the 23 recommendations chronologically, and presented to the Board (Report 2023-14) in March 2023 for review and approval. The review of the Proposed Implementation Plan to date has led to the following:

1. For recommendation 1, the Board approved one (1) representative.
2. The Board resolved to create a Situation Analysis Implementation Review Committee (the Committee) to further consider and address the Recommendations. Terms of reference were passed by the Board at the April meeting (Resolution No. 23/44).

The Committee was formed in the summer 2023. At the September 2023 Board meeting, the Committee put forward a resolution to have Administration consult

with Indigenous partner organizations about forming an Indigenous advisory body to the Board, supporting both Recommendation #1 and #2 approved by Resolution No. 81B.

3. The Board approved the following recommendations by Resolution No. 23/81 as presented: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.
4. The Board approved recommendation 1 and 2 by Resolution No, 81A (Advocacy for DSSAB Legislation Amendment).
5. The Board approved the following recommendations by Resolution No. 23/94: 12, 13, 21, 22.
6. The Committee deferred recommendation 23 to the Indigenous Advisory Committee.

Following the approval of some items from the proposed implementation plan, Administration organized those recommendations into an action plan for operational use. The action plan includes 9 cohesive projects or deliverables that address the 23 recommendations.

COMMENTS

The tables below summarize the progress made to date.

**Table 1: Situation Analysis Recommendations:
Action Plan Updates June 30, 2024**

Action Plan Activities	2024 Q2 Update
1. Decolonize Policies & Procedures	<p>In Progress:</p> <p>A framework for reviewing Policies & Procedures through an Inclusion and Indigenization lens is under development. The framework is on track for completion by Q4, with implementation to begin in 2025.</p> <p>In the meantime, the staff dress code policy and procedure has been updated to better define business casual attire with language added to welcome and encourage traditional cultural clothing.</p>

2. Internal Culture Strategy / Plan
(Internal stakeholders & service recipients)

In Progress:

An organization-wide Inclusion Lens toolkit/plan is in progress. This toolkit will cover 12 of the 23 recommendations from the Situation Analysis Report and include strategy as well as key definitions and concepts needed for successful implementation. This is on track for completion by Q4.

In the meantime, several related items are in progress or complete. Highlights:

- Refreshments and food are available at Intake. (Rec #15)
- Plain and welcoming language prioritized in current Strategic Plan. Review framework developed in Q1, piloted in Q2 on Tenant Survey, and will be implemented across the organization beginning in Q4. (Rec #16)
- Staff DEI Table established. (Rec #4)
- Indigenous artwork purchased for raffles and incentives. (Rec #14)
- Integrated Beautification Plan Request for Proposal was tendered; Review in progress. (Ref: #14)
- Sharing Circles have been hosted by the DEI Table with virtual and in-person options. (Rec #7, #8)
- Culturally appropriate staff training offered as part of standard annual training. (Rec #10)

3. External Partnerships Strategy / Plan (External)

In Progress: In research stage. Inclusion of strategies related to Recommendation #23 – Integrate transparency with Indigenous Partners – Deferred to Indigenous Advisory Committee

4. Board Reconciliation Framework	In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sharing circle for the Board will be scheduled in Q4. (Rec #5) • Board training about Reconciliation will be scheduled in Q4 (Rec #6)
5. Continued Board Advocacy: OW and Housing	In Progress
6. Indigenous Representation on the Board	Pending Formation of Indigenous Advisory Committee - Consultation in Progress* Engagement with Indigenous partner organizations began in April 2024 to discuss the development of an Indigenous Advisory council. As of Q2, 10 of 19 invited organizations have participated in these consultation sessions.
7. Board advocacy to MCCSS re DSSAB Act to implement changes to Board makeup	Pending Formation of Indigenous Advisory Committee*
8. Wellness [Cultural] Room (at HQ)	Pending Research by Administration
9. Physical Safety in Homes	Pending Further Research by Administration

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT

This report supports the 2020-23 Strategic Plan Objectives 23 through 26, related to “Enhancing Indigenous Awareness and Relations”. Elements of the Recommendations have been included in the 2024-27 Strategic Plan, including Recommendation #16 (plain language) which is addressed in Strategic Plan objective 4.1, and Recommendation #6 (schedule culturally appropriate training for the Board) which is addressed in Strategic Plan objective 6.2.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications related to this Report.



Financial implications for 2024 were included in the approved budget. Budget implications for 2025 and beyond will be presented for consideration in subsequent annual budgets.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the update should be received as presented.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Attachment #1: [Revised Situation Analysis Implementation Plan \(August 2024\)](#)

PREPARED BY:	Carole Lem, Communications and Engagement Officer
SIGNATURE	
APPROVED BY	William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Executive Officer
SIGNATURE	
SUBMITTED BY:	William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Executive Officer

Revised Situation Analysis Implementation Plan

August 2024

Blue Sky Report Recommendations (in order)	Proposed Implementation Activity	Action Plan Activity #:	Board Approval
<p>1. One Indigenous Representative on TBDSSAB Board of Directors.</p>	<p>The Board agreed to pursue having one Indigenous representative on the Board. The Board formed a Situation Analysis Implementation Plan Committee to see this item through.</p> <p>The Board make up is determined by the DSSAB Act, which may present as a barrier to this recommendation (see next item). This change to legislation may take a long time. In the meantime, The Board agreed in November 2023 to pursue the formation of an Indigenous advisory council/body as an interim solution. Res No. 81B.</p> <p>Once the Advisory Body is in place, they will lead consultation with the three Political Territorial Organization (PTO) and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) (all four together if possible) to discuss how to appoint a representative to the TBDSSAB Board of Directors. Together, determine: What this looks</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Approved: Res No. 23/81A</p>

Blue Sky Report Recommendations (in order)	Proposed Implementation Activity	Action Plan Activity #:	Board Approval
	like and who decides (e.g.: nominations vs appointment? PTOs/MNO decision, or Ministry/Minister?)		
2. Continue Advocacy with Minister of MCCSS re: DSSAB Act in 2023.	Implementation to be determined as informed by discussions in Recommendation #1. This will include suggestions of amendments to regulations.	7	Approved: Res No. 23/81A
3. Decolonization of policies/ procedures.	Approach recommendations 3 & 4 at the same time. Other Recommendations from the Situation Analysis for inclusion in this strategy have been noted below. Will refer to this strategy as the Internal Culture Strategy (working title)	1, 2	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)
4. Include Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism into [Organizational] Strategy.	<p>This recommendation aligns with the 2020-23 Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Research, create, and implement a framework for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and Anti-Racism for TBDSSAB, that includes an action plan for how to decolonize policies and procedures with the intention of being more inclusive. This framework will be developed with input from service recipients, staff, community partners, research best practices, Human Resources and the Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Table.</p>	2	

Blue Sky Report Recommendations (in order)	Proposed Implementation Activity	Action Plan Activity #:	Board Approval
	Include: evaluation and implementation plan created with a Human Rights/Human Resources, Process Review & Data lens to ensure efficient implementation, education and ongoing monitoring.		
5. Scheduled Board of Directors Sharing Circles	Recommend that Sharing Circles be offered to the Board a minimum of once a year, as part of a regular meeting.	4	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)
6. Scheduled Board culturally appropriate training.	Through Sharing Circles, determine what training options are available and make recommendations to the Board. Whenever training is available to the Board, make it available to staff as well.	4	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)
7. Board of Directors attend community gatherings.	<p>Recommend members of the Board attend and participate in a minimum of two community gatherings hosted by Indigenous partners per year (e.g.: powwows, potlucks, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation walk, or other events) as representatives of TBDSSAB (separate from gatherings held in partnership with TBDSSAB).</p> <p>The Board will need to decide what the process looks like for attending community gatherings as a representative of TBDSSAB – the plan should include</p>	4	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)

Blue Sky Report Recommendations (in order)	Proposed Implementation Activity	Action Plan Activity #:	Board Approval
	<p>frequency, how events are chosen, reimbursement, etc.</p> <p>Include as part of an External Partnerships Strategy that will foster connection and engagement with community partners (Action Plan Activity #3).</p>		
<p>8. Staff sharing circles</p>	<p>Recommend that Sharing Circles be offered to staff at minimum annually, optimally quarterly. Develop a strategy* to ensure implementation aligns with existing engagement opportunities, for example: the possibility of syncing these sessions with the quarterly new staff orientation schedule.</p> <p>*Include this item in the Internal Culture Strategy (Action Plan Activity #2)</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)</p>
<p>9. Convenient [and inclusive] access to staff engagement [such as sharing circles, focus groups, surveys etc. with virtual and in-person options].</p>	<p>Develop internal engagement strategy* to ensure staff across the district are engaged as much as those in Thunder Bay – offer more virtual participation options and hybrid activities, including (but not limited to) staff sharing circles.</p> <p>*Include this item in the Internal Culture Strategy (Action Plan Activity #2)</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)</p>

<p>10. Scheduled staff culturally appropriate training.</p>	<p>Cultural awareness and Reconciliation-focused training to be incorporated into mandatory training at onboarding. Working in collaboration with Human Resources and the DEI Table, create a strategy* for offering ongoing learning/unlearning opportunities to foster inclusion as an organization. Include participation feedback to confirm value/keep current with other opportunities as they arise.</p> <p>*Include this item in the Internal Culture Strategy (Action Plan Activity #2)</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)</p>
<p>11. Traditions incorporated into everyday TBDSSAB practice.</p>	<p>CAO Division to develop a standard process* around traditional ceremony, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land acknowledgment framework (not a script) that covers what should be covered, as well as by whom and at what types of events/meetings. - Standard process and parameters for Opening & Closing ceremonies for events, as well as honorarium/gifts for Elder/Knowledge Keepers - Standard process and parameters around when 	<p>2</p>	<p>Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)</p>

	<p>smudging is offered (including at properties, for tenants/service recipients)</p> <p>*Include this item in the Internal Culture Strategy (Action Plan Activity #2)</p>		
12. Wellness [Cultural] Room for smudging for staff / [service recipients].	<p>Develop a strategy for making necessary upgrades at HQ office to include a safe space that is smudging-friendly, with a proper ventilation system (and particular consideration of allergies/asthma in relation to this room) to support it. Research phase should also include feedback about what the desired space may include, for both service recipients and staff. Further research into options for offering this type of space across the district would also be required. Estimated costs would be included in the proposed 2025 budget.</p> <p>If we proceed – costing to be received from Director Corporate Services/Manager Infrastructure and Asset Management via procurement process.</p>	8	Approved: Res No. 23/94 (Nov 2023)
13. Elder in Residence for Staff / Clients.	<p>Discuss potential collaboration with Indigenous community partners. Discuss whether this would be a contracted agreement, colocation of</p>	3	Approved: Res No. 23/94 (Nov 2023)

	<p>service from an organization with Knowledge Keepers on staff, or other arrangement, and what the cost implications would be.</p> <p>Include as part of an External Partnerships Strategy (Action Plan Activity #3) that will foster connection and engagement with community partners.</p>		
<p>14. Indigenous Art</p>	<p>Short term: Include art as a giveaway with gift cards for service recipient raffles/event prizes. Offer art as a gift to speakers, elders, etc.</p> <p>Medium term: Share an EOI for artists, including co-creation/facilitation, and work with ISS and CS to develop implementation plan.</p> <p>Long term: multi-year, all-division strategy to: 1) create murals across housing portfolio, 2) incorporate art in engagement, programming, etc. (with staff, service recipients, community partners, etc). Consider partnerships to display art from other organizations, arts groups, etc. at various TBDSSAB buildings, including offices, housing properties, etc. Consult with artists and arts groups about strategies to display art (enclosed in an art case.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)</p>

	Consult DEI Table to ensure inclusive approach.		
15. Welcoming environment: dress code / tea / time.	<p>Gradual improvements to space, as well as a review of operational practices and their influence on welcoming environment.</p> <p>Short Term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin with a review of dress code through an inclusivity and trauma-informed lens with feedback from Human Resources and the DEI Table • Reinstate the play area in the Intake area for families (that was removed due to COVID-19). • Review standard appointment times and treatment (definitions of late; cancelations) <p>Longer term: Recommend research and implementation of a strategy to improve quality of interactions with service recipients without it being prescriptive. Include research and recommendations about the logistics of offering tea/refreshments in a self-serve way (where it would be set up, how it would be maintained/monitored) and budgetary considerations for offering tea/refreshments (including how often snacks could be offered, etc.) to service recipients attending</p>	2	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)

	appointments in this strategy.		
16. Plain language	<p>Administration is in the process of developing a multi-year Plain Language strategy to move to written and verbal plain language for the whole organization. Trauma-informed plain language or interpersonal communication should be part of the project, with consultation with the DEI Table for an equity lens.</p> <p>*Include this item in the Internal Culture Strategy (Action Plan Activity #2) AND External Partnerships Strategy (Action Plan Activity #3)</p>	2, 3	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)
17. Convenient access to client engagement / sharing circles	Offering sharing circles for service recipients - get feedback from ISS managers, supervisors and staff to get ideas of what this would look like. Could be as simple as a regular schedule of sharing circles added to resource centres.	2	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)
18. Wraparound services / Indigenous Partners	Seek feedback from community partners if there is interest in working from our HQ for services. (Mushkiki, Matawa, TBIFC, KKets, EarlyON Programs, etc.) See if people are interested in coming in even a few times a month. Once this is established, develop strategy for similar partnerships at all offices and/or resource centres/community hubs.	3	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)

	<p>Short term: Review current usage and develop a strategy to dedicate lower traffic training/interview room(s) to this purpose.</p> <p>Long term: Consider whether capital funding or renovations are required to better accommodate wraparound services at HQ as well as District offices. (e.g.: Merge a few of the interview rooms if the space is not big enough.)</p> <p>* Include as part of External Partnerships Strategy (Action Plan Activity #3)</p>		
19. Continued advocacy: Ontario Works and Housing	Board continue advocacy to the province for increases to social assistance rates and for more affordable housing options to house those on our wait list. As social assistance rates are not a new advocacy topic for our organization, consider new strategies and partnerships to make the advocacy as effective as possible.	5	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)
20. Comfortable atmosphere for client feedback	Include questions related to comfort and Indigenous cultural considerations as standard questions in service recipient surveys moving forward. Also, offer the option to complete surveys in-person/verbally and alternate feedback methods for those who don't want to fill out a survey.	2	Approved: Res No. 23/81 (Sept 2023)

	Include in the Internal Culture Strategy (Action Plan Activity #2)		
21. Physical safety in homes	<p>Some of this is being addressed with 2023 budget and approval of new positions. Security Officer position has been approved.</p> <p>With the caveat that we are unable to intervene under HSA / RTA and rely on police intervention, meet with community partners to develop culturally appropriate strategies and increased community presence in housing portfolio. Work together with Indigenous partner organizations to arrange for supports to be available. Further to physical security, the implementation plan(s) from the Security Review could be discussed with Indigenous partners and the DEI Table to ensure it has been considered through an inclusivity lens—including not only an Indigenous lens, but a full inclusivity lens.</p>	9	Approved: Res No. 23/94 (Nov 2023)
22. Continue engagement / Indigenous partners	It was recommended that an invitation to an in-person action-oriented meeting be initiated once or twice a year. It was also recommended to be transparent with Indigenous partners by holding quarterly meetings to identify barriers and address them collaboratively.	3	Approved: Res No. 23/94 (Nov 2023)
23. Integrate transparency with Indigenous partners		3	Not Yet Approved – Deferred to

	<p>Include Recommendations #22 & 23 in the External Partnerships Strategy (Action Plan Activity #3) to address both of these recommendations together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite Indigenous partner organizations to participate in a Sharing Circle to establish relationships and begin discussions. The Sharing Circle can also include elements of an action-oriented meeting to determine areas where we can work together more collaboratively.• Determine frequency of these meetings/sharing circles at the first meeting. Make it an open invitation; guests are welcome to bring others. Aim for minimum twice a year		Advisory Committee
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Action Plan Activities

Action Plan Activities	Blue Sky Rec #:	Lead	Timeline	Description:
1. Decolonize Policies & Procedures	3	CEO Office	2024: Plan 2025: Implement	A framework for reviewing Policies & Procedures through an Inclusion and Indigenization lens. Framework will include operational definitions and implementation plan.
2. Internal Culture Strategy / Plan (Internal stakeholders & service recipients)	3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20	CEO Office	2024: Research 2025: Implement	An organization-wide Inclusion Lens toolkit/plan is in progress. This toolkit will cover 12 of the 23 recommendations from the Situation Analysis Report and include strategy as well as key definitions and concepts needed for successful implementation.
3. External Partnerships Strategy / Plan (External)	7, 13, 16, 18, 22, 23	CEO Office	2024: Research 2025: Implement	External partnerships strategy will be developed to guide reconciliation activities with community partners to the benefit of our service recipients. Will be developed as a living document to include operational definitions, key contacts, and implementation plan.
4. Board Reconciliation Framework	5, 6, 7	CEO Office	2024: Research 2025: Implement	A framework will be developed to guide Reconciliation activities for the TBDSSAB Board of Directors. This will include definitions, guidelines, and implementation plan.

5. Continued Board Advocacy: OW and Housing	19	Board, CEO Office	Ongoing	Board continue advocacy to the province for increases to social assistance rates and for more affordable housing options to house those on our wait list. As social assistance rates are not a new advocacy topic for our organization, consider new strategies and partnerships to make the advocacy as effective as possible.
6. Indigenous Representation on the Board	1	Board, CEO Office	2024: Consultation 2025: Advocacy (ongoing)	Engage Indigenous partner organizations to discuss: a) the formation of an advisory council as an interim solution to having Indigenous perspectives informing Board decisions, and b) the long-term goal of having an official Indigenous representative on our Board.
7. Board advocacy to MCCSS re DSSAB Act to implement changes to Board makeup	2	Board, CEO	2024: Consultation 2025: Advocacy (ongoing)	Once an Indigenous Advisory council is formed, they will support the Board and Administration in advocating to the province (MCCSS) to include changes to DSSAB Act to allow for Indigenous representation on the Board.
8. Wellness [Cultural] Room (at HQ)	12	CEO, Corporate Services	2024: Research (ongoing)	Develop a strategy for making necessary upgrades at HQ office to include a safe space that is smudging-friendly, with a proper ventilation system (and particular consideration of allergies/asthma in relation to this room) to support it. Research phase should also include feedback about what the desired space may include, for both service recipients and staff. Further

research into options for offering this type of space across the district would also be required. Estimated costs would be included in the proposed 2025 budget.

If we proceed – costing to be received from Director Corporate Services/Manager Infrastructure and Asset Management via procurement process.

<p>9. Physical Safety in Homes</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>CEO Office, Corporate Services</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Some of this is being addressed with 2023 budget and approval of new positions. Security Officer position has been approved.</p>
				<p>With the caveat that we are unable to intervene under HSA / RTA and rely on police intervention, meet with community partners to develop culturally appropriate strategies and increased community presence in housing portfolio. Work together with Indigenous partner organizations to arrange for supports to be available. Further to physical security, the implementation plan(s) from the Security Review could be discussed with Indigenous partners and the DEI Table to ensure it has been considered through an inclusivity lens—including not only an Indigenous lens, but a full inclusivity lens.</p>