



BOARD REPORT

REPORT No.: 2025-32

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2025

SUBJECT: SITUATION ANALYSIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 2025-32 (Chief Executive Officer Division) we, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, receive the Situation Analysis Implementation Plan update for information only;

AND THAT the Board approves the draft Terms of Reference for the creation of an Indigenous Advisory Table and directs Administration to proceed with a recruitment process.

REPORT SUMMARY

To present The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or 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 Board made the following decisions related to the Proposed Implementation Plan, as summarized in Report 2024-33:

1. For recommendation 1, the Board approved one 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 of 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 Table to the Board, supporting both Recommendation #1 and #2 approved by Resolution No. 23/81B.

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 recommendations 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 future Indigenous Advisory Table.

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 nine cohesive projects or deliverables that address the 23 recommendations.

It was proposed that an Indigenous Advisory Table be established along the lines of the existing Child Care and Early Years and Homelessness Prevention Program Advisory Tables.

Engagement with Indigenous partner organizations took place to discuss the development of an Indigenous Advisory table. A total of five engagement sessions were held between April 2024 and March 2025, with additional opportunities for feedback by email. In total, representatives from 15 of 19 invited organizations participated in these consultation sessions.

COMMENTS

Draft Terms of Reference for an Indigenous Advisory Table were finalized in April 2025 for presentation to the Situation Analysis Committee in June and are included in this report.

The creation of an Indigenous Advisory Table would assist in the development and implementation of several of the ongoing actions and would assist in achieving the goal of reaching an External Partnership Strategy.

The Situation Analysis Review Committee met on June 19, 2025 to review the draft Terms of Reference, and agreed through consensus that the draft be presented to the Board for approval.

Situation Analysis Recommendations: Action Plan Updates as at June 30, 2025 (2025-Q2)

The tables below summarize the progress made to date on the nine action plan activities.

Action Plan Activities	2025 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 has been deferred for completion by 2025-Q4, with implementation to begin in 2026.</p> <p>In the meantime, several internal practices and processes have been updated to reflect this activity.</p>
2. Internal Culture Strategy / Plan (Internal stakeholders & service recipients)	<p>In Progress:</p> <p>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 scheduled for completion by Q4 of 2025.</p> <p>Several related items are in progress or complete. Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. Full implementation across the organization began in 2024-Q4. (Rec #16) • Staff DEI Table established. (Rec #4) • Indigenous artwork purchased for raffles and incentives. (Rec #14) • Integrated Beautification Plan consultation completed in Q2 2025; Report to the Board

presented in May 2025 meeting.

Implementation plan in progress with inclusion in 2026 budget. (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 development stage. Inclusion of strategies related to Recommendation #23 – Integrate transparency with Indigenous Partners – Plans to involve new Indigenous Advisory Table to assist in implementation (draft Terms of Reference established).

4. Board Reconciliation Framework

In progress: Development of a framework has been deferred for input from the Indigenous Advisory Table.

- A sharing circle for the Board was held in 2024-Q4. (Rec #5)
- Board training about Reconciliation was held in 2024-Q4 (Rec #6)
- Recommendations to be provided through Indigenous Advisory Table.

5. Continued Board Advocacy: Ontario Works and Housing

In Progress (Ongoing)

Delegation meetings with Ministers are requested semi-annually at AMO and ROMA. Position papers include statistics related to the often-disproportionate impact of the topic on Indigenous populations.

Future position papers may be developed in consultation with Indigenous partners through the Indigenous Advisory Table.

6. Indigenous Representation on the Board

Pending Formation of Indigenous Advisory Table - Consultation in Progress*

Engagement with Indigenous partner organizations took place to discuss the

development of an Indigenous Advisory table. A total of 5 engagement sessions were held between April 2024 and March 2025, with additional opportunities for feedback by email. In total, representatives from 15 of 19 invited organizations participated in these consultation sessions.

Draft Terms of Reference were finalized in April 2025 for presentation to the Situation Analysis Committee in June, included in this report.

7. Board advocacy to MCCSS re DSSAB Act to implement changes to Board makeup

Pending Formation of Indigenous Advisory Table*

Research into this action item is included as an objective for the Indigenous Advisory Table. Look for guidance from the Board to determine next steps.

8. Wellness [Cultural] Room (at HQ)

In Research Stage

Identified options and space, will seek input from Advisory Table prior to implementation.

9. Physical Safety in Homes

In Research Stage

Our approach to increasing physical safety in homes is multifaceted. Security and support services have been arranged for tenants facing imminent safety concerns. Education has been provided at tenant engagement meetings to increase understanding of how to prevent and report unsafe situations, as well as supports available if needed. Physical safety and security at an infrastructure level was also included in the Integrated Beautification Plan consultation completed in Q2 2025.

We will seek input from the Indigenous Advisory Group on additional steps that can be taken to increase physical safety through an Indigenous worldview that considers Indigenous ways of knowing.

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 immediate financial implications related to this Report.



Financial implications for 2024 and 2025 were included in the approved budgets. Budget implications for 2026 and beyond will be presented for consideration in subsequent annual budgets.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the update on Action Plan Activities should be received as presented. It is further concluded that the Board receive and approve the draft Terms of Reference for an Indigenous Advisory Table.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Attachment #1: [Draft Terms of Reference for Indigenous Advisory Table](#)

PREPARED BY:	Carole Lem, Communications and Engagement Officer
SIGNATURE	
APPROVED BY	Ken Ranta, Chief Executive Officer
SIGNATURE	
SUBMITTED BY:	Ken Ranta, Chief Executive Officer



DRAFT Terms of Reference

TBDSSAB Indigenous Advisory Table

Authority

- Governance and Procedural By-law 03-2021
- BRD-01:62 Board Committees and Advisory Tables

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Board's Indigenous Advisory Table (The Table) will be to advise on matters identified by the TBDSSAB Board or the Table.

Mandate / Scope

The Table shall:

- Research, strategize, and/or advise on matters identified by the TBDSSAB Board or The Table.
- Keep abreast of any significant developments related to TBDSSAB service delivery as it pertains to engagement with Indigenous service recipients and community organizations.
- Receive input from external parties as required to inform the work of the Table.
- Facilitate consultation on priority topics with different audiences, as required and directed by the Board.
- Develop recommendations regarding priority topics as required.
- Report to the Board to identify the Table's recommendations in the form of memos, position papers, or other correspondence.
- The Table does not have authority over staff or operations and must work within the Board's governance mandate and policy framework.

Priorities can be identified by either the Board or the Table. As a Table of the Board, all recommendations put forward by the Table will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

Objectives / Deliverables

The following deliverables have been identified for the Table's first term:

- Review and conduct research on priority topics identified by the TBDSSAB Board or Table.
- Assist in developing parameters for consultation and community engagement (e.g.: focus groups), with strategies for when such consultation should be Table-led and Administration-led.
- Facilitate consultation (via focus group, questionnaire, or other means) to identify key priorities for the Table.
- Review and conduct research necessary to make recommendations to the Board of Directors about what Indigenous representation on the Board could look like—, and suggested approaches to advocacy to the Ministry for changes to the *District Social Services Administration Board Act*.
- Explore knowledge exchange and communication opportunities with similar Boards and audiences interested in pursuing similar representation or advocacy.

Structure

- The Table shall have a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 community members in addition to Board and TBDSSAB Administration members.
- The Table shall be Co-Chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a member of the Table.
- The Table will elect the Co-Chair at its first meeting of the year.
- Meeting quorum shall be 50%+1 of the Table membership.
- The Table shall be established for a 2-year term, with consideration for alternating term ends for continuity.
- Continuation of membership will be at the discretion of the Board at the end of each term.
- Staff resources for the Table will be provided as per Policy: BRD-01:62 Board Committees and Advisory Tables.
- Agendas, minutes, and all communication for the Table will be prepared and distributed by the CEO or assigned recording secretary.
- Minutes are prepared and submitted to the Board for timely communication. If submitted in draft form and substantial changes are made upon approval they will be resubmitted to the Board.
- Recommendations are submitted to the Board for consideration via report or memorandum through Administration.

Membership Composition

The Table will be comprised of the following:

- Community Stakeholder members, comprised of:
 - Representation from multiple municipalities and communities across the District of Thunder Bay, ideally with some members representing communities outside of Thunder Bay
 - Representatives from non-political Indigenous-led community organizations serving the District of Thunder Bay
 - Indigenous individuals with past or present involvement with TBDSSAB programs and services, or TBDSSAB-funded organizations serving Indigenous clientele in the District of Thunder Bay
 - An Elder or Traditional Knowledge Keeper
- TBDSSAB Board Chair (ex-officio);
- Maximum of two members of the Board, appointed by the Board;
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
- Staff resources, as ex-officio members, required to support the work of the Table will be determined by the CEO.

Nominations & Selection Process

- Priority will be given to Indigenous people, with cross-representation as identified under 'Membership Composition'. Where the Table has been unsuccessful in recruiting the minimum number of Indigenous nominees, non-Indigenous individuals may be considered.
- Notice of nominations will be distributed widely among Indigenous partner organizations (See list below: "Partner Organizations").
- All identified Partner Organizations are eligible to nominate prospective members, including their own staff, service recipients, or people with lived experience.
- Notice of nominations will also be shared with accredited media as well as online through the appropriate platforms/channels. The contact list(s) for distribution will be maintained by the Office of the CEO.
- Nominations can be submitted by or on behalf of prospective members through the method identified in the recruitment materials.
- Nominations will be reviewed and selected by the CEO in consultation with the appointed Board members to the Table TBDSSAB Board Chair .

Partner Organizations

Notice of nominations for the Table will be distributed broadly to the following partner organizations and audiences:

- Indigenous-Led TBDSSAB-Funded Organizations – Organizations with a mandate to serve Indigenous populations within the District of Thunder Bay, with whom TBDSSAB has funding agreements in place at the time of recruitment.
- Indigenous-Led Partner Organizations – Organizations with a mandate to serve Indigenous populations within the District of Thunder Bay, with whom TBDSSAB does NOT have funding agreements in place.
- Indigenous Friendship Centres in the District of Thunder Bay
- Indigenous Communities – Notice of nominations will be shared with Chief and Council of the First Nation communities in the District of Thunder Bay
- Tribal Councils
- Indigenous Advisory Councils representing the District of Thunder Bay (e.g.: City of Thunder Bay Urban Aboriginal Advisory Council)
- Indigenous service recipients / People with Lived and Living Experience (PWLLE) from target demographics (e.g. youth, women, elders)

Frequency of Meetings

The Table will meet on a semi-annual basis or on an exceptional basis as required, at the discretion of the Co-Chairs. Meeting dates will be established to meet the information requirements of the Board. Meetings will be held at the TBDSSAB headquarters or via e-meeting platforms, at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.

Compensation

Membership is on a voluntary basis. Members do not receive compensation for their participation. Members will be reimbursed for travel/expenses incurred to attend meetings. (as per TBDSSAB Business Expense and Travel policy)

Conflict of Interest

All members of the Table are required to declare to the Co-Chair(s) any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest arising in regard to any matter under discussion by the Table.

Confidentiality, Communications, Consultations

All Table members will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Confidentiality, communications and consultation will aim for balance among the following objectives:

- Balance of transparency and recognition of the need for confidentiality
- Providing a confidential forum for open discussion that enables broad consideration of a range of issues and options
- Opportunities for broader input and engagement on specific issues to enhance the work undertaken by the Table

To create a climate of open dialogue, members are requested to keep detailed conversations at the Table confidential. The Table may decide, on a case-by-case basis, to share specific information externally to get feedback.

The Table may advise Administration on which issues would benefit from broader consultation. Consultation activities may be led by Administration or the Table as directed by the Table Co-Chairs.

Members agree that materials used to support and facilitate the discussions are working documents, and that their distribution will be limited to the Table membership.

All materials produced by or for the Table, including statistical analysis, reports and advice, remain the property of TBDSSAB. The First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) will be applied to research and data collection activities as deemed appropriate by the Table or Administration.

Documents related to the work or support for the Table will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Review of Terms of Reference

The Table will review the Terms of Reference on a bi-annual basis.