

TDSB Task Force on the success of Students of Somali Descent

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday March 5, 2013

Time: 6:00PM

Location: 5050 Yonge Street – Cafeteria

IN ATTENDANCE: Abdifatah Warsame, Abubakar Hagi, Ahmed Elmi, Ahmed Omar, Ali Mohamed, Faisal Omar, Fatouma Ahmed, Hassan Ibrahim, Hamdi Mohamed, Haweiya Egeh, Jim Spyropoulos, Trustee John Hastings, Trustee Maria Rodrigues, Marja Tiilikainen, Mohamed Abdullahi, Mohamed Sambul, Muna Ali, Mustafa Abdi, Rayaan Elmi, Shadia Abess, Zahra Hassan.

Regrets: Abdi Aidid, Ali Abdullahi, Trustee Chris Bolton, Idil Burale, Mohamed Haji-Nur, Patrick Knight, Munira Abukar.

Minute Taker: Zahra Hassan

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Dinner

2. Welcome

- Haweiya Egeh chairing the meeting.
- Meeting called to order at 6:08PM

3. Approval of Minutes (February 13, 2013)

- Minutes approved

4. Sub-Committee Progress Reports

• West Sub-Committee Report:

- Conference Title "Let us talk about education"
- Reaching out to volunteers to get community involvement
- Gaining support of trustees from those communities
- Three locations:
 1. Rexdale/Dixon
Location: Thistletown Collegiate Institute (TCI)
Date: 3rd week of May
 2. Lawrence Heights including Jane/Wilson (Munira leading)
Location: TBD
Date: 1st week of May
 3. Jane/Finch
Location: York woods Library
Date: 2nd week of May

• Downtown Sub-Committee Members:

- Location: Reagent Park
- Date: TBD
- Marketing strategy: Flyer, social media and word of mouth
- The downtown neighbourhood has become spaced apart due to revitalization. Therefore, would like to commission school buses to bring people to location
- Expected to have 120-150 people attending
- Will follow Islamic traditions and separating guest by gender
- 15 youth from 'Young G' have been recruited to help with outreach
- Flyer – thinking of using the same flyer as other communities
- Jim: TDSB Creative Services can help with flyer creations

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- **Timelines:**
- June 26th: Present the Task Force recommendations to the Board meeting
- June 12th: Program and School Services committee meeting (Group of trustees). Chairs need to make deputation. Committee will ask questions and hopefully make recommendations to the board
- June 4th: Administration, Finance and Accountability Committee meeting

Suggestion:

- May 3rd: Finish all consultations
- May 17th: Have all the recommendation ready to be presented for the June 26th Board meeting in order to be implemented by September 2013 school year.

• **East Sub-Committee Members:**

- Muna A and Haweiya E joining the group
- Location: Abu Huraira Centre
- Date: Sunday March 24th
- Time: TDB –between 3-8PM
- Segregation not an issue- can have gender mixing in controlled environment
- Questions: Facilitators and note takers provided by TDSB? Would they be compensated or recognized by the TDSB?
- Jim: Students can be trained and compensated by the TDSB but the format needs to be the same for all community consultations

Suggestion: Take advantage of upcoming Somali Youth Basketball Tournament on March 9-10th.

- Conduct informal interviews with youth who will be coming from all over Toronto and surrounding areas (including Ottawa). Use this opportunity to pilot the questions and collect data from youth
 - **Decision:** East-end committee will conduct interviews during the tournament
 - Research committee will look into existing questions and get feedback from the larger group by Friday prior to sending it to the East-end Committee to administrate during the tournament
- 7:13PM – Permission for trustee to film 5 minutes of footage on TDSB community engagement – **all in favor** (end 7:23pm)
- #### • **Research Sub-Committee Members:**
- Group looked into existing data especially around culture and language
 - Data based on 5 year punchmark from the 1st cohort
 - Looking at how we can support parents
 - 14 questions in total compiled

Suggestion: Research community to share 5 minutes facts-based presentation at the start of each community consultation- **all in favor**

- Jim: take a positive tone when asking questions. Ideally a maximum of 5 questions
- Questions: how do we capture data on jailed youth? Do we need to form another committee to capture voices of youth in detention? Yes- **all in favor**

• **Youth in Detention Sub-Committee Members:**

- Abdifatah W - Lead

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- Faisal O
- Fatouma A
- Mohamed A
- Muna A

- **Jim:** there are about 600 Somali students in detention centers
- They come from different school systems.
- Suggest: group to look at partnerships that will facilitate transition for students to return to TDSB schools

- **Outreach Sub-Committee Members:**
 - A) Mainstream media and community media
 - B) Social media – use TDSB twitter account and live tweeting from personal accounts with hashtag – **all in favor**
 - C) Friendly media
 - **Suggestion:** Jim and the co-chairs will only be speaking to the media through official TDSB channels (communications department can help craft key messages from the Taskforce to the media) - **all in favor**
 - **Suggestion:** use standard flyer for all community engagements - **all in favor**
 - Question: is there budget for media?
 - Jim: Yes.

- **Teachers Sub-Committee Members:**
 - Getting in touch with Somali teachers as well as non-Somali teachers who work with large Somali student populations
 - Date: Tuesday and Thursday during March break (March 12 and 14)
 - Format: Open focus group discussions
 - Request: Taskforce members to send any names of Somali teachers or/and non-Somali teachers who work with Somali students to the teachers sub-committee or invite them to attend either session

Additional Actions Items:

- Jim will send community consultations questions from prior TDSB Taskforce to the group
- Group forward suggestions for the flyer to either Zahra, Jim or the co-chairs in order for the Creative Services team to start the design

5. Other Business

- Bio for website: Use names only– **all in favor**

6. Discuss dates for upcoming meetings

- Next Meeting: Tuesday March 19th, 5:30PM
- Agenda: Finalize logistics and questions for community consultations

Next Meeting:	Tuesday March 19 th , 2013 5:30PM Dinner 6:00PM-8:00PM Meeting
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ADJOURNED:	8:32PM
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