



Interim Expectations for Parent/Family Engagement in the School Improvement Process

To: Committee of the Whole

Date: 12 June, 2019

Report No.: 06-19-3691

Strategic Directions

- Transform Student Learning
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposed 2019/2020 interim expectations for parent/family involvement in the school improvement process be received.

Context

In the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), the Community Engagement Action Plan (p.46) states that staff will: establish expectations for parental and student engagement in the school improvement process. It is recognized that diverse student and parent perspectives are important to transform student learning, raise achievement and well-being and address opportunity gaps. On March 20, 2019 the Board received a report which outlined a consultation process for the development of *interim* expectations for parent involvement in the school improvement process until related policy statements are developed through the formal review of P023 Parent and Community Engagement Policy (Appendix A).

A consultation group was established through outreach to community advisory committees and staff groups (Appendix B). Staff met with the consultation group prior to creating any expectations. The first meeting focused on establishing a common understanding about the Toronto District School Board's school improvement process and to solicit their ideas about the things staff should consider when developing expectations for family engagement in the school improvement process.

The feedback gathered from the group informed the development of interim expectations which were then shared with the consultation group at a second meeting. The frameworks for the discussions at the two meetings are enclosed in Appendix C. Some of the themes raised in the discussion included:

- Enhanced outreach strategies are required for families of students who are under-served
- Regulation 613 requires school councils to be consulted on school improvement however this practice varies widely
- Families aren't aware that they can participate in school improvement process
- Capacity needs to be built in order to fulfill these new expectations
- Explore a variety of methods and strategies for engaging families and value multiple forms of family engagement
- There are diverse voices and perspectives that must be considered
- School councils aspire to engage a variety of parent voices
- Identify and promote current effective practices for engagement at the elementary and secondary panels and school councils
- Provide families with information about the school improvement process

The 2019/2020 proposed interim expectations for school teams will focus on:

- Explaining the school improvement process and the value of family involvement in it
- Seeking feedback from families on the school's goals and multiple interpretations of the school's wellbeing and achievement data

Both the staff and consultation group members agree that there is value in continuing to work together to support positive implementation from various perspectives.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

- The expectations staff will ensure communication to schools prior to September 2019
- Additionally, a number of resources will be created to assist with the involvement of families and students
- This will include protocols for engagement and communication tools
- Strategies to engage students in responding to data will also be developed
- Superintendents will work with Community Support Workers to build capacity among Principals/Vice-Principals to engage families and school councils
- There will be further consideration of strategies to monitor implementation

Resource Implications

Not applicable

Communications Considerations

Staff will work with the Community Relations Department to develop resources and all other communication needs and support required.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

P023: Parent and Community Engagement Policy

Appendices

- Appendix A: Parent and Student Involvement in School Improvement Interim Report
- Appendix B: Consultation Committee Representation
- Appendix C: Consultation Process, 9 May and 21 May, 2019

From

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Parent and Student Involvement in School Improvement Interim Report

To: Program and School Services Committee

Date: 20 February, 2019

Report No.: 02-19-3580

Strategic Directions

- Transform Student Learning
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

Recommendation

It is recommended that this report be received.

Context

The following matter was referred to staff at the November 28, 2018 Meeting of the Board of Trustees (Appendix A):

“That policy and procedures be developed to create the way by which parents, students, community and trustees are informed and involved in the school improvement process.”

Building strong relationships and partnerships within school communities to support student learning and well-being is one of the priorities in the Multi-Year Strategic Plan. Achieving this goal will require the collaboration of various groups, most notably families, students and educators. Diverse student and parent perspectives are important to transform student learning, raise achievement and well-being, and address opportunity gaps.

Integrating student voices into various aspects of the school improvement process will ensure that their identities, interests, needs and strengths accurately drive school and classroom programming. When students are engaged in co-constructing their learning they are more likely to develop confidence, experience belonging and success. Similarly, staff benefit from the insights families share about their children’s needs,

strengths and experiences at school. Involvement in the school improvement process also encourages families to support learning at home in a variety of ways.

As part of the Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), action plans were released in October 2018. The Community Engagement action plan (p.46) states that staff will: establish expectations for parental and student engagement in the school improvement process (December 2018). Similar commitments to involving students in the school improvement process were made under the Student Voice action plan (p.38).

Schools are at different stages of involving families and students at appropriate stages of the school improvement process. Superintendents of Education support and coach principals in their implementation of these expectations during their monthly School Improvement Visits. It is acknowledged that practices vary by school and expectations need to be established, and effectively communicated to all stakeholders. The goal is for these expectations to create more meaningful and authentic interactions between staff, students and parents.

Clear expectations will ensure school staff know and understand what's expected of them, promote greater awareness among parents about the specific opportunities for involvement in their local school and create greater equity of opportunity across schools. It will also foster greater collaboration between and among groups of schools and parents which will generate resources and supports for implementation.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Policy P.023, Parent and Community Engagement, is scheduled to be reviewed in April 2019 and a new Student Engagement Policy is to be developed in the fall of 2019. The goal is to work concurrently on both policies; to add components to P.023 with specific commitments and directions relating to parent and student engagement as part of the school improvement process. Specific policy statements about involvement in school improvement will be brought forward to the Governance and Policy Committee for consideration to the Board of Trustees during the Policy Review Process.

While the two policies are fully reviewed, developed and approved by board, staff will continue to focus on the implementation of the action plans. Community Advisory Committees (CACs), the Parent and Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC), the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), the Toronto School Administrators Association (TSAA), the Student Senate and Superintendents of Education will be consulted in the development of the interim expectations.

Additionally, a number of resources will be created to assist with the involvement of families and students. This will include protocols for engagement and communication tools. Insights will be gathered through Focus Groups with schools where student and parent engagement has resulted in productive relationships and tangible positive

impact. Strategies to engage students in responding to data will also be developed. This staged approach to implementation will result in an awareness of effective practices, research and stakeholder perspectives to inform the future development of the corresponding policies.

The expectations of this motion will be integrated into the budget development process to ensure effective implementation.

Resource Implications

Not applicable.

Communications Considerations

To be developed.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

P.023: Parent and Community Engagement Policy

Appendices

- Appendix A: Board Motion, November 28, 2018
- Appendix B: Parent and Community Involvement Policy (P.023)

From

Colleen Russell-Rawlins, Associate Director of Equity, Engagement, Well-Being and School Improvement at colleen.russell-rawlins@tdsb.on.ca or at 416.397.3187.

APPENDIX A

Summary of Decisions

Regular Meeting

November 28, 2018

Presented in Planning and Priorities Committee, Report No. 76, November 21, 2018	Agenda Item 16.5 (2)	Agenda Page 76
<p>2017 Student and Parent Census [3533]</p> <p>The Board decided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) That the 2017 Student and Parent Census data, as presented in the report, be received; (b) That the following be referred to staff for a report in the January 2019 cycle of meetings: <p>That policy and procedures be developed to create the way by which parents, students, community and trustees are informed and involved in the school improvement process.</p>		

Toronto District School Board

Policy P.023 SCS

Title: **PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**
 Adopted: November 25, 1998
 Revised: January 26, 2005, **July 13, 2005**
 Review: -----

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To establish a framework for building and supporting parent and community involvement in the Toronto District School Board

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Parent Includes parent, guardian or any other caregiver legally recognized as acting in place of the parent.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director

4.0 POLICY

- 4.1. The TDSB believes that education is a shared responsibility among parents, the community, students, staff and the Board. By working together we all contribute to the improvement of our schools and to the success of our students. The Board shall provide parents with the information they need to support their children's education and shall involve them in decisions, which affect their children and their schools. The Board is committed to ensuring that all parents and members of our diverse communities have opportunities to participate in the school system, and shall provide the support necessary to achieve that goal.
- 4.2. A variety of communication procedures shall be developed and maintained at the school and system levels to ensure access to educational information needed by diverse parents and communities, and to facilitate two-way communication between parents and schools, and among parent groups.
- 4.3. Support for community outreach programs shall be provided to school communities, which experience significant challenges in promoting and sustaining the involvement of parents in their children's education and in their schools.
- 4.4. In accordance with O. Reg. 612/00 of the Education Act, every school shall establish a school council that shall be recognized as the official school community organiza-

tion representing the interests of the parents and students of the school, and that shall be provided with the information and support necessary for fulfilling its role.

- 4.5. Opportunities shall be made available to school council chairs and other local parent leaders to assist them in developing their school community leadership skills and to school administrators to assist them in enhancing their skills in building positive school community relations.
- 4.6. Parent forums at a ward, quadrant or regional level shall be supported in order to promote parent consultation and input on matters related to policy, program or operations of the school system.
- 4.7. Community advisory committees shall be established where necessary to provide the Board with ongoing community advice on specified areas of Board policy or program, as well as on educational issues of broad community interest; in addition, ad hoc advisory committees, task forces, or working groups with community representation shall be established where required, on the understanding that the input from all such advisory groups does not preclude the input of other stakeholders across the system.
- 4.8. Working relationships shall be supported with Community Liaison Groups who wish to work with the Board to address educational issues of concern to these groups, and who are formed in accordance with the criteria and procedures established for these groups.

5.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this policy.

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Operational Procedure PR.558 SCS: Parent and Community Involvement

O. Reg. 612/00, School Councils

Appendix B

**Parent Engagement in the School Improvement Process
Committee Representation
May 9th and 21st, 2019**

Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee (EPCAC)

Environmental Sustainability Community Advisory Committee (ESCAC)

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC)*

Parents as Partners for Mental Health and Well-Being*

Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC)

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Toronto School Administrators Association (TSAA)

Community Support Workers (CSWs)

Superintendents of Education

Colleen Russell-Rawlins, Associate Director of Equity, Well-Being and
School Improvement

John Chasty, Superintendent of Student Voice, Parent & Community
Engagement and Well-Being

Michelle Munroe, Central Coordinator of Parent and Community
Engagement

****Also a representative of Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC)***

Appendix C

Family Engagement in the School Improvement Process

Consultation Process

Day 1 - May 9, 2019
Day 2 – May 21, 2019



Multi Year Strategic Priority (MYSP)



**Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships
Within School Communities to Support
Student Learning and Well-Being**

NEW

Establish expectations for parental and student engagement in the school improvement process (December 2018)

SIP Consultation

Consultation Process

- Consultation to develop interim expectations
- Policy Review of P023 – Parent and Community Engagement (TBC) which will include policy statements related to family engagement in the school improvement process.
- Stakeholder Participation
 - Members of Community Advisory Committees
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing Parent Group
 - Representation from Staff Groups
 - Community Support Workers – Additional Family Engagement

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Context

Context for Implementation

- Goal is to set one or two realistic expectations for implementation in Year 1
- Elementary and secondary expectations may need to be different
- Focus on family and caregiver engagement
- School Councils also have a legislated responsibility to be consulted on the school improvement plan. This action focuses on additional engagement with families who may not be part of a School Council.
- Each group has multiple stakeholders. Each has different responsibilities.

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SIP

What have you heard about TDSB's school improvement process?

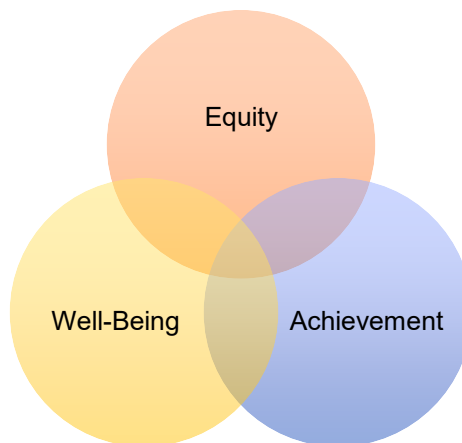


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Overview of School Improvement

School Improvement Process – Three Goals

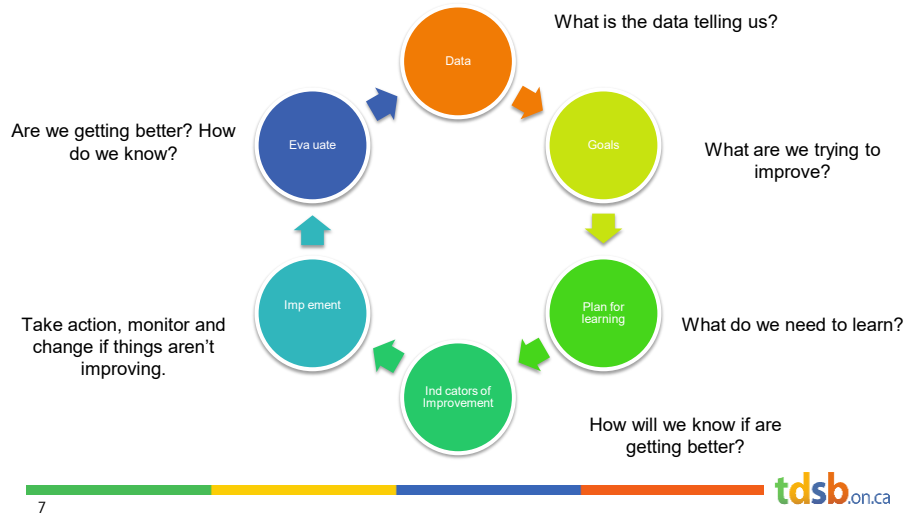


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Overview of School Improvement

TDSB's School Improvement Process



Current Examples

What's happening now?

- Sharing: <https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/crmarchant/School-Improvement-Plan>
- Grandparents & caregivers discussing wellness in the early years
- Parent-Teacher conversations about student census data during Conferences
- Parent surveys

SIP

What questions do you have about school improvement?



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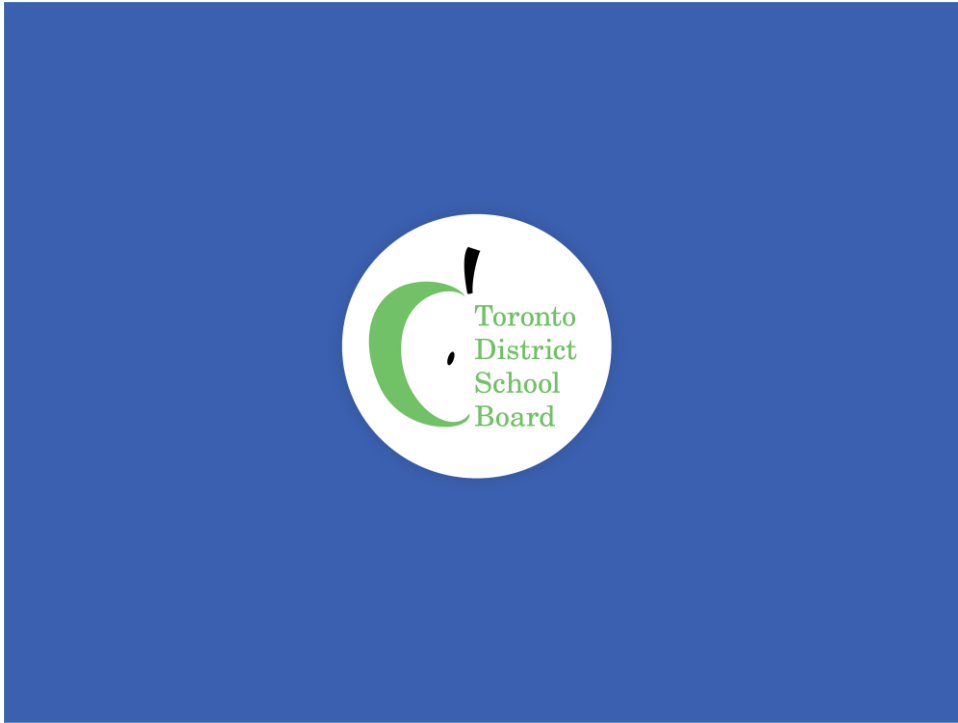
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Small Group Dialogue

What should we think about when developing the interim expectations?

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Family Engagement in the School Improvement Process

Consultation Process

Day 2 – May 21, 2019



Family Engagement in the School Improvement Process

Consultation Process

- Consultation to develop interim expectations
- Policy Review of P023 – Parent and Community Engagement (TBC) which will include policy statements which related to engagement in the school improvement process
- Stakeholder Participation
 - Members of Community Advisory Committees
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing Parent Group
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 - Community Support Workers – Additional Family Engagement

Context

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What We Heard (May 09, 2019)

- School communities are diverse and all families should have an opportunity to participate in the school improvement process (SIP)
- Families currently have limited knowledge or involvement in the SIP
- SIP is a school team/principal process
- Most school councils maybe unaware or informed of the SIP and will receive information/update at council meetings

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What We Heard Cont'd... (May 09, 2019)

- Regulation 613 requires school councils be consulted on the SIP process, however their participation in the process varies across the system
- Enhanced outreach strategies are required for families of students who are under-served
- Engaging families into the SIP is a new expectation and staff and family capacity needs to be built in order to fulfill expectations
- Meaningful engagement with school councils and families who children are under-served is important

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Considerations for Interim SIP Guidelines

Communication

- Inform families of their rights to participate in the SIP process
- Consistent messaging of the SIP process (what, purpose, scope & role stakeholders) that is accessible to all families

Role of Stakeholders

- Clarity of roles/responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the process (e.g. P/VP, Superintendents, staff, families etc.)

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Considerations for Interim SIP Guidelines Cont'd...**Engagement of family voice**

- Engage in strategies that honour and value all family identities and lived experiences
- Create spaces (in/out of the school) that can facilitate dialogue and build relationships
- Explore a variety of methods and tools (e.g. chai & talk, surveys, workshops etc.) for engaging families meaningfully into the SIP process
- Capacity building for families to engage in the SIP process (e.g. data sharing etc.)
- Identify best practices for engagement strategies at the elementary and secondary level (school councils and families)

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tdsb.on.ca**Considerations for Interim SIP Guidelines Cont'd...****Enhancing support for School Council Engagement in the SIP**

- The interim guidelines process will enhance dialogue on strategies for engaging the school council in the SIP process

Managing Expectations

- Various entry points for family engagement
- Learn from current and effective strategies
- Ensure process is relatable
- Achievement of the interim expectations will establish the foundation to develop a culture of parent/educator engagement
- Accountability and monitoring

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Interim Expectations for 2019-20

Interim expectations will focus on the following three areas:

1. SIP Planning Process
2. School Goals (wellbeing & achievement)
3. School Data (wellbeing & achievement)

Principals will share information about the school improvement planning process and seek input on school goals and interpretation of school data from:

- School Councils (as required under Regulation 613) and
- Families of students who are under-represented and/or under-served.

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Key Considerations for the Group

- What areas of the Interim Expectations are promising?
- Are there any gaps?

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