

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### CSCM.14.10.25 Recommendations Relating to Policy 100: Central Lottery Admissions

**Date:** 14 October 2025

**To:** TDSB Supervisor and Director of Education

**From:** Katrina Matheson, Communications WG Co-Lead

Nicole Di Wu, Consultations Working Group Co-Lead

Susan Lee, Communications WG Co-Lead and Communications WG Co-Lead

#### SUMMARY

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This motion is made to the TDSB Director, Supervisor, and Minister of Education to broadly re-commit the TDSB policy review process to prioritize the use of an open consultation process informed by transparent, data-driven metrics, and to further consider educational best practices to achieve greater equity and accessibility in special interest programs. Accordingly, we further propose the development of:

- 1) More **guided pathways** to special interest programs,
- 2) More **'high-touch' strategies** to ensure that children from target populations receive personal recruitment and application support, and
- 3) Plans to **expand** the TDSB's most successful special interest programs to other campuses.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Consultations and Communications WG has held significant concerns about transparency, process, and overall decision-making among senior TDSB staff prior to the provincial takeover of the board last June. We continue to have these concerns under supervision. A lack of transparency was evident in the recent handling of the P100 consultation process, both for the glaring lack of relevant supporting data provided by the board, as well as its abrupt cancellation without any communication to parents.

In anticipation of the scheduled P100 policy review which began earlier this year, the Consultation WG recommended that the specific data be provided to support the TDSB's claim that the central lottery has improved racial equity and minority representation in special interest schools, among other points. None of our requested information has been made public to our knowledge.

At the same time, parent co-reps whose children attend special interest schools report that this revised policy has caused damage to their schools in various ways, namely by increasing attrition rates and ultimately decreasing program quality. **It is important to note that these concerns are not the result of increased diversity and equity in enhanced programs but**

**rather appear to arise from the dismantling of program expectations altogether.**

The term that staff has used for this low-expectation strategy is “no barriers.” We have had difficulty finding educational research to support the benefits of a no barriers approach or even to describe the documented use of a no barriers approach by other school jurisdictions at all. If any such literature exists it should be made public, especially given the last P100 consultation cycle was marred by fraudulent research. The apparent lack of care in adhering to established best practices is made doubly concerning by the lack of mechanisms to ensure that families are aware of policy review periods, and that feedback presented during consultation will be taken seriously.

Moreover, while the implementation of the P100 consultation and policy review process has been deeply flawed in the past, we do not agree with the TDSB’s recent decision to prematurely close the consultation process.

Rather than a cancelled process, we would have preferred to see an open public consultation process informed by:

- o **Enrollment data**, before and after lottery implementation, made public with the goal of impartially supporting or refuting the claim that the central lottery, as implemented, has improved access to special interest programs by minority groups. We also reiterate that we would like the data requested by PIAC on April 1st be released.
- o **Vetted strategies** with verifiable academic sources, including zero tolerance (e.g., lifetime ban) for researchers who present hallucinated sources. By our own investigation, and in absence of reliable information from the board staff, we would like to propose the following strategies to increase target minority group populations in specialized schools:
  - **More Guided Pathways** - Rather than abolishing all standards for entry, there should instead be multiple ways that a student can enter an applicant pool for specialized programs. Known as a guided pathways strategy, this approach focuses on establishing, in a targeted way, junior special interest programs or even extracurricular clubs at the elementary level to act as reliable feeders into special interest programs in middle and high school. These pathways could include an automatic invitation to apply for successful participants in the junior program; or to all students who achieve certain benchmarks in relevant courses, exams; or by universal screening. Furthermore, guided pathways could be implemented alongside a priority lottery system to ensure that programs are drawn only from a pool of qualified applicants, as compared to the status quo “no barriers” approach which omits any kind of vetting at all.

- [More "High-Touch" Strategies](#) - "High touch" means deploying more caring adults throughout the recruitment process to systematize personal interventions. This ensures that students are affirmed and nurtured within their special interest, that they and their family are aware of relevant special interest schools, and that they have adequate support to complete the application process.
- **Modeling Desirable Programs** - Desirable programs within the TDSB should be treated as models for new schools and campus reorganizations so that students from all areas and backgrounds who have strong interest and/or aptitude can have a realistic (i.e., administratively and geographically) chance at obtaining a spot and ultimately attending a special interest program. Furthermore, having multiple, popular programs across the system would allow for "[local norming](#)", in the case that benchmark scores or marks are required for entry into more rigorously academic programs, thereby increasing equitable access.

The above recommendations in relation to P100 also reflect our recommendations to the board and Ministry of Education more broadly. That is, we recommend that the TDSB and the Ministry re-commit broadly to data-driven decision-making, adherence to established educational best practices, and the deployment of resources to ensure the presence of more caring adults, adequately empowered to provide high-quality support to students at school.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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The recommendations in this report have undetermined financial impact to the long-term governance of the TDSB, but no direct impact to the administration of PIAC.

## HISTORY

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On March 6, 2025, the Consultations WG report detailed the following recommended questions in relation to P100, to ensure that parents and staff had enough information by which to engage in a policy review:

- a. Curriculum – has the curriculum remained the same since the lottery or has it changed and if what way. (Were courses modified or removed after the lottery?)
- b. The adequacy and quality of support for students who are struggling with the rigorous nature of the programs. Was extra tutoring support given to students?
- c. What was the comparison of success rate or dropout rate of students pre lottery and post lottery? Data on retention rates would be recommended.
- d. With the lottery was the diversity objectives met in the student population?
- e. Were students ever declined a position in the CIP due to their geographical location?
- f. How was information about the various CIP programs sent to schools across the TDSB?
- g. How many students are applying from the marginalized, racialized communities and how many of those who are applying are being accepted into the Central interest programs?
- h. What are the success criteria TDSB staff for the lottery and the CIP?
- i. How many students have requested a waiver of the courses of the programs?

The full Consultation WG report was presented in the April 1st General Member meeting and follows in Appendix.

## **COMMENTS**

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This recommendation supports student achievement in accordance with the mandate of the parent involvement committee under Reg 612/00.

## **SPONSORS & Co-SPONSORS**

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Sponsor: Katrina Matheson, (Co-Rep Ward 10)

Co-sponsors: Nicole Di Wu (Co-Rep Ward 12), Susan Lee (Co-Rep Ward 12)

## **APPENDICES**

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# WORKING GROUP REPORT

## Consultations

**Date:** March 6, 2025  
**Co-leads:** Susan Lee, Nicole Di Wu

### **DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES**

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Provide recommendations to TDSB and Director of Education concerning system level concerns including related to parent engagement. Coordinate and facilitate all Board and Ministry consultation requests.

### **UPDATE**

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#### **PIAC Consultation Working Group – March 6, 2025 @8:00 pm via Zoom**

*Present: Susan Lee, Nicole Wu, and Andrew Waters, Mercy Charles, Gordon Harvey Regrets: N/A; Absent: N/A*

- Discussed the recommendations and motions.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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#### **TDSB Supporting Parent Engagement**

The Consultation Working Group proposes that PIAC make the following recommendations:

1. Currently, in the policy development process PIAC is not consulted on Policies until Phase 4 along with other external advisory committees. The Director of Education and the TDSB develop a process that allow PIAC to be involved at an earlier phase of the policy development process.
2. PIAC and external advisory committees are consulted on the policy development process but not on the procedural development process. However, historically where parents and TDSB at times conflict is in the procedural aspect of the policy: we request that PIAC and other advisory committees be consulted during the development of procedural process to reduce conflict and to encourage good faith in the board. As well as information on recommendations made to the board and how decisions were made about the policies and procedures.

#### **Request for Review of the Central Interest Programs**

Whereas the TDSB has in place various central interest programs to assist and enhance the interests of students and the TDSB strives to offer students valuable educational opportunities while creating a nurturing climate to promote their growth, development and success.

Therefore, be it resolved that the board conduct a full review of the CIP paying attention to but not limited to the following areas:

- a. Curriculum – has the curriculum remained the same since the lottery or has it changed and if what way. (Were courses modified or removed after the lottery?)
- b. The adequacy and quality of support for students who are struggling with the rigorous nature of the programs. Was extra tutoring support given to students?
- c. What was the comparison of success rate or dropout rate of students pre lottery and post lottery? Data on retention rates would be recommended.
- d. With the lottery was the diversity objectives met in the student population?
- e. Were students ever declined a position in the CIP due to their geographical location?
- f. How was information about the various CIP programs sent to schools across the TDSB?
- g. How many students are applying from the marginalized, racialized communities and how many of those who are applying are being accepted into the Central interest programs?
- h. What are the success criteria TDSB staff for the lottery and the CIP?
- i. How many students have requested a waiver of the courses of the programs?

#### **QUESTION(S)**

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N/A

#### **NEXT STEPS & ACTION ITEMS**

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N/A