



COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee Name: Alternative Schools Advisory Committee

Date: February 3rd, 2015

Time: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Present: Trustee Ausma Malik; Chair Kowthar Omar; Chair Liam Rodrigues; Adam Faux (Parent); Rebecca Holzman(Parent); Bettina Von Lier(Parent)s; Mark M’ Quillan(Parent); Beth Coleman(Parent);Martha Wheaton (Parent)

TDSB: Manon Gardner; Anna Gemmiti (Vice-Principal); Grant Fawthrop (Principal); Denis Lopes (Principal); Pamila Matharu (Staff)

Teleconference: Lisa Ball (Beaches Alternative Junior School)

Recorder: Latha John (Parent and Community Engagement Office)

ITEM	DISCUSSION	RECOMMENDATION/MOTION
1. Call to Order/Quorum	Liam called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Quorum was achieved.	
2. Approval of Agenda	Communication to be added to the Other Business on the agenda. Ward 7 added as a secondary component to the agenda item Alternative voice to P/VP on the agenda. Motion to approve the agenda with the amendments. Executive Superintendent Manon Gardner informed the committee that Trustee Gough will be joining the ASAC meetings in future.	
3. Approval of Minutes	Briony Glasgow spelling to be corrected on the minutes	

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	Approval of the minutes. Motion to approve the minutes.	
4. Superintendent's Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sibling Policy ▪ Gender Policy 	Sibling policy The Board is not reviewing the sibling policy or the gender policy. The board would like to promote its schools positively with no exclusion. Individual cases are dealt when they are brought to attention.	
5. EQAO Policy Changes in writing	EQAO-The board has communicated to the Superintendents and principals the message that the students will not be penalised by the board, no pressure on students, parents or teachers for the EQAO. The message will be given to S032 for clarity on the board's stand on EQAO. Questions: Where is the policy of TDSB around EQAO stated in writing? The ministry expects all students to write EQAO. The Ministry has not come up with the policy. Action: Executive Superintendent Manon Gardner to follow up on the board's policy on EQAO.	
6. Trustee Letter regarding ASAC	Every Committee with the board has a requirement to fill out the questionnaire to list out the mandate, organisational structure and role of the committee. The decision from the ASAC was not to fill the questionnaire and requirements as ASAC is an autonomous advisory body to the school board. The committee has questions over the objectivity and integrity of the requirements. The committee feels it will lose focus on its objectives trying to fit into the parameters of requirements. The committee feels that this discussion is ongoing and welcomes input from the committee members.	

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	<p>Feedback Executive Superintendent Manon Gardner -The board recognises the role ASAC for the students, for Alternative Schools. If the board or the PCEO requests more demands from ASAC Executive Manon Gardner offered to be part of the discussion.</p> <p>Question : Trustee Malik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the questionnaire be shared? To have a meeting or group discussion around the questionnaire. • What is the goal of the questionnaire? 	
<p>7. Follow Up - Revisit Ministry Response to ASAC Request for a Schedule D - AQ</p>	<p>Ministry response is that it is not a requirement s for the teachers to have AQ for the Alternative course is that the teachers applying for Alternative Schools are not required to have this and the ministry doesn't foresee any changes this year.</p> <p>Question: Can the letters be accessed by the committee? The letter can be used by the community .</p> <p>Action: Chair Kowthar to make the letters a topic of discussion at the next informal meeting</p> <p>Trustee Malik on Teacher piece have unions been contacted?</p>	
<p>8. Follow Up – Proposal Single Alternative Schools Superintendent</p>	<p>Proposal for single Superintendent for Alternative schools. Issues arising from different approaches and decisions taken by different Superintendents on sibling and gender issues.</p>	

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	Understanding about the policies across the board for alternative schools.	
9. Possibility of Introducing an Alternative Voice to P/VP		
10. Training for P/VPs		
11. Follow Up – Pathways Elementary & Secondary Bridge	<p>Ministry response for creating pathways for Alternative schools The Ministry provides the resources and the decision on pathways are made at the board level.</p> <p>ASAC wants an inclusive environment for Alternative Schools. Question: Transfer of students- Uniformity in gifted and French immersion. Alternative School is unique in public education system; Students transferring from one alternative school to another can go through a radically different experience. There is no natural entry point for Alternative schools. Process of growth of the numbers in schools</p> <p>Executive Superintendent Manon Gardner – Every year through planning exercise the list of schools are looked at, what was planned last year and what is being planned. If expansion is requested the reasons for expansion and the conversation of expansions and projections is done yearly between the planners, principals, superintendents and trustees through a staff exercise.</p> <p>Discussion There is huge waiting list and many of them stay on the waiting list for years.</p>	

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	<p>There is a big population who want their children in Alternative Schools. The path from elementary alternative to secondary alternative is not always direct and clear.</p> <p>Feedback Alternative Secondary Schools have no catchment and is boundary less. There are no connectors and the board is slowly establishing more pathways.</p> <p>Question: Can the funds be diverted from the under-utilised schools towards alternative schools?</p> <p>Executive Superintendent Manon Gardner - Each alternative school is identified as a school / entity by the ministry. Often, alternative schools use more space and as per ministry standards alternative schools may be reflected as underutilised. Funds from underutilised cannot be moved to alternative schools.</p>	
<p>12. Parent Involvement in Hiring</p>	<p>Executive Superintendent Manon Gardner -Margaret Wilson's report to the Ministry looks at the Trustee's involvement in hiring practices. Consistent hiring practice is what the board wants to have and parents' involvement in the hiring practices is not foreseen at the board. The board's hiring practice is in a unionized environment in accordance with the collective agreement.</p> <p>Discussion</p>	

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	<p>Many of the original alternative schools were founded by parents and staff where hired by the parents. This is not the current practice.</p> <p>Action: To bring Employee services to answer questions on collective agreements on hiring practices .Where can the voice of parents and community can be heard.</p> <p>Action: Parents/student put forth a document on hiring practices and parent involvement in the hiring. A committee to be formed, ASAC members to put forth names to the chairs of ASAC to have their voices on parent involvement.</p>	
<p>13. Declining Enrolment and Impact Inglebrook</p>	<p>Declining Enrolment- Enrolment keeps changing on a yearly basis and in alternative school is a challenge.</p> <p>Grant Fawthrop-There are niches and spots where students can go between schools get their courses done. This has been done with schools in close proximity. Unique challenge is the splitting the students academically where one schools takes ownership and other school with regards to staffing.</p> <p>Executive Superintendent Manon Gardner -Campus Model can be looked at for Alternative school as a proposal where pathways can be defined within a group of schools in the vicinity. This proposal should be put forth and vetted among standing committees and number of issues need to be looked at the staffing of teachers, shifting of hours. ASAC needs to advocate this model. Proximity of schools is an important factor.</p>	

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	<p>Question: In under allocated elementary Schools Alternative schools can resources be shared?</p> <p>Elementary schools need to be compatible.</p>	
<p>14. Communication from ASAC</p>	<p>Communications were not received regarding the ASAC meetings.</p> <p>Discussions Chair Kowthar- The email membership list of ASAC was created updated by Linda Mendonca(Committee Assistant- PCEO) based on communications she received in response to requests for RSVP's from members who requested to be removed from the list.</p> <p>The dates on the TDSB ASAC website were not updated, the Facebook page were not updated.</p> <p>There were challenges at transitions and the communications were effected.</p> <p>Feedback and ideas are welcome from the committees. It was suggested that communications be sent to Schools through school councils, the voice of parents are powerful and parents needs to be represented at the ASAC committee.</p>	
<p>15. Follow Up – Update on Beasties</p>	<p>Deferred to next meeting</p>	
<p>16. New Business Promoting Alternative Schools - PR Work (ex: Newsletter, Beasties, Advertising)</p>	<p>Deferred to next meeting</p>	



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17. Ward 7	Trustee Robin Pilkey- looking for Ward 7 Reps from all the committees. Information from the board/ committees needs to be communicated to the parents.	
18. Next Meeting Date	Next meeting is scheduled April 16, 2015	
19. Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm	