



**Equity Policy Advisory Committee
Minutes**

Date: Thursday, January 26, 2012

Time: 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Committee Room A, 5050 Yonge Street

Present: Michael Kerr (Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change Co-Chair); Nadine Sookermany (Parent Co-Chair); Diane Dyson (Parent Alternate Representative); Jim Spyropoulos (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Coordinating Superintendent, Inclusive Schools, Student, Parent and Community); Yolanda McClean (CUPE, Local 4400 Representative); Ricardo Francis (Parent Representative); Patricia Hayes (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Manager, Human Rights); Kevin Sutton (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Student Equity Program Advisor); Augustre Munro (Parent Representative); Jacqueline Spence (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Central Coordinating Principal, Equity); Karlo Cabrera (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Program Coordinator, Equity); Tara Gallagher (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Officer, Human Rights); Tim McCaskell (Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario Alternate Representative); Evan Muller-Cheng (Agincourt Community Services Association Representative); Kayode Brown (Just BGraphic Representative); Marjolein Winterink (TDSB Staff Resource Representative for Maria Rodrigues); Imam Abdul Hai Patel (Former Commissioner of Ontario Human Rights); Margaret Blair-Grant (Parent Representative); Carmen Bierman

Regrets: Maria Rodrigues (TDSB Trustee Co-Chair); David Smith (TDSB Trustee Member); George Martell (Education Action Toronto Representative); Doreen Fumia (Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario Representative); Jerako Biaje (Parent Representative); Owen Leach (Organization of Parents of Black Children Representative); Victor Beausoleil (Redemption Reintegration Services Representative)

Recorder: Amanda Tiberio

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/Recommendation
Call to order-Welcome and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. Roundtable introductions were made. 	
Superintendent's Items and Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two new positions in Equitable and Inclusive Schools were created last spring: Central Coordinating Principal, filled by Jacquie Spence, and Program Coordinator, filled by Karlo Cabrera Equitable and Inclusive Schools also employs four Instructional Leaders, four Equity Program Advisors; and works with the Aboriginal Education Centre (approximately 15 employees) and Gender-Based Violence Prevention staff. The role of the staff is to identify disadvantages on many different levels within community and intervene effectively 	
Equity and Inclusive Schools Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department is partnering with Families of Schools to enter schools, communicate, and create relationships with students. They are looking for opportunities to work with community agencies to bring professional learning to students and teachers (including curriculum development, help with student issues, etc.). Student Equity Program Advisors are working with student administrative councils to find out what equity looks like in the context of each individual school. They are working with central staff 	

	<p>to develop a way to deliver the curriculum in an equitable way. They are trying to make it a continuous process with multiple opportunities to visit each school</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools need to work to make events and activities more representative of the population • Department should use profiles of schools from Parent and Student surveys to see changes in schools over time. It is best to know the student population to serve their needs and have context behind certain issues • The concept of having more culturally relevant and reflective libraries in schools was discussed. The meanings of “reflective” and “relevant” must be explored before determining how schools can incorporate inclusive material into their collections. Material should be diverse for all students. Teachers must learn/know the library material in order to engage the students, and connect them to material that they may relate to. 	
<p>Aboriginal Education Centre Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item pushed to next meeting due to absence of Cathy Pawis, Central Co-ordinating Principal, Aboriginal Education. 	
<p>Opportunity Gap Action Plan Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Trustees have approved the concepts in the Opportunity Gap Action Plan report and they are awaiting further details about the cost of the initiatives • Many of the initiatives are already in action, including the Voluntary Identification process for Aboriginal Students, additional staffing in the Aboriginal Education office, opening a new Native Learning Center in partnership with Native Family and Child Services of Toronto at Kingston Road and Galloway Road, and the Task Force for Portuguese-speaking students <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns arose about the way punishment is dealt with – parents are finding that there is nothing proactive which happens other than expulsion or suspension and want to know if the number of social workers at schools might be increased. The TDSB has a budget shortfall and is planning on cutting staff rather than increasing. There was a suggestion to create a sub-committee to work toward how to resolve students’ problems and help student achievement. • Concerns arose about how likely and realistic the goals of the OGAP are when taking the budget shortfall into consideration, as implementation of many of the plans may be costly. • Suggestions were made to put pressure on the Government to provide adequate funding for education so that problems can be resolved both inside the school environment and outside, in the community. • Marjolein Winterink will communicate with Trustee Rodrigues about how budget shortfalls should not affect students who need the most support. She suggested a letter 	

	<p>from EPAC be written to trustees to enforce this idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a weak connection between students and teachers. EPAC should work on how to close that gap and create stronger relationships between staff and students. Jacquie Spence spoke about how Equity is working with teachers, giving them tasks and ideas to use in the classroom, and requesting feedback to see what is working. • Suggestions were made to build more community partnerships with external organizations • School staff should better reflect the communities they serve, which will make them more relatable with students. A suggestion was made to invite the Senior Superintendent of Employee services to a future EPAC meeting to discuss how to move forward with this idea. • Concerns arose about the role of the Education Act in equity, and how it can be fulfilled with budget restraints. It was mentioned that the Education Act is outdated and does not include information about equity, and how there are certain expectations in the act which cannot be fulfilled. • The head of constituencies could make a difference and should stand up for the needs of the students. The TDSB should make a statement, and take the lead which others will likely follow. A suggestion was made to invite the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Chris Bolton, to the next meeting. • EPAC will extend an invitation to Chris Bolton, Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Chris Spence, Director of Education, to attend the next EPAC meeting. Co-chairs Nadine Sookermany and Michael Kerr will prepare a presentation. Any suggestions or offers to help can be emailed to Michael Kerr or Nadine Sookermany. • EPAC members should try to attend and be an active part of Saturday of the FUTURES Conference in May, and possibly get onto the conference agenda. 	
<p>4th Year of the EIE Strategy Review and Moving Forward</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2012 is Year 4 of the EIE Strategy. They are supporting schools with inclusive curriculum, using measurement tools to identify characteristics of equitable and inclusive schools, which are evaluated by parents, students and teachers themselves. • A walk-through process is implemented in SW schools and participants are able to see what is/isn't happening in schools and why. Measurement tools will be used to identify different processes and assess whether they will work in other schools. • Not every school working on it – need to look at and id process, see how it has failed or succeeded, using measurement tools to figure out where they are, assess with community – what does an inclusive school look like – participants in walk through able to critically look at pieces to see yes/no/why. • Suggestions were made to collate projects that are already happening - including partnerships that the TDSB already has with York University and Ryerson University - and try to find alignment to come up with better conclusions. • EIE is funded by the Ministry of Education. 	
<p>Parent and Student</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2nd Parent and Student Census is being completed this year. The student census 	

Survey	was completed in November, and the parent survey will be delivered in February 2012.	
Communication Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions were made to work with ICAC and other committees to share ideas • Student voices should be included in the committee. Although parents and organizations represent students, they deserve a representative that may actively participate on EPAC • In past city hall forums, many people displayed interested in being more active in EPAC. Anybody who wants to help track down those people and invite them into the committee can contact Michael Kerr or Nadine Sookermany. 	
Membership Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item pushed to next meeting due to time constraints. 	
Future Meeting Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting will be on March 1, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. 	
Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m. 	

Next Meeting: March 1, 2012 – 6:30 p.m. at 5050 Yonge Street, Committee Room A