



**Equity Policy Advisory Committee  
Minutes  
Thursday, March 7, 2013  
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Executive Meeting Room, 5050 Yonge Street**

**Present:** Saida Sabrie (SPLC Representative); Saada Awaleh-God (Parent Representative); Margaret Blair-Grant (Parent Representative); Michael Kerr (Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change Co-Chair); Dauda Massaquoi (Parent Representative); Christopher Penrose (Success Beyond Limits Representative); Omer Kowser (Parent, Co-Chair); Augustre Munro (Parent Representative); Patricia Hayes (Manager, Human Rights); Pardeep Nagra (Manager, Employment Equity); Patricia Hayes (Manager, Human Rights, TDSB); Kevin Sutton (Equity & Inclusive Schools); Trustee Maria Rodrigues; Jim Spyropoulos (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Coordinating Superintendent, Inclusive Schools, Student, Parent and Community); Karlo Cabrera (Equity & Inclusive Schools)

**Teleconference:** Imam Abdul Hai Patel (Former Commissioner of Ontario Human Rights)

**Regrets:** Tuval Dinner (White Ribbon Campaign); Sheena Resplandor (Asian Canadian Educators Network); Diane Dyson; Ken Jeffers (TDSB Staff Resource to Committee, Co-ordinator, Gender-Based Violence Prevention);

**Recorder:** Linda Mendonca (Committee Assistant, EPAC)

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/Recommendation
1. Call to order-Welcome and Introductions	Co-Chair Penrose called the meeting to order @ 6:50 pm, and welcomed everyone. Everyone introduced themselves.	
2. Approval of Agenda (Co-Chairs)	<p>***Motion to approve the agenda with the following amendments was moved by Abdul, seconded by Saida, all in favor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Add “Equity Forum” under Other Business, Item #11.</li> </ul> <p>Co-Chair Penrose reported that the Co-Chairs have been working with staff to have someone from the Somali Task Force come and speak to EPAC. They were not available to come to this meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Linda will revise the agenda and post it on the website.</li> <li>▪ Co-Chairs/Staff will work on getting someone from the Somali Task Force to come and present to EPAC.</li> </ul>
3. Approval of February 25 13 Minutes (Co-Chairs)	<p>***Motion to approve the minutes was moved by Augustre, seconded by Michael, all in favour.</p> <p>Michael raised the concern about the bcc vs. cc issue raised at the last meeting. It was suggested that all EPAC membership be cc'd unless otherwise requested. Members are asked not to do a “reply all” when responding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Linda will post the minutes on the website.</li> <li>▪ All future communications to EPAC members will be cc'd unless otherwise requested.</li> </ul>

<p>4. Communications</p>	<p>Karlo reported that Trustee Glover put forward a motion at the March PSSC meeting that the Financial Literacy Curriculum be reviewed by EPAC, and that EPAC put forward recommendations at the May PSSC meeting. Trustee Kouros Houshmand said he would like to be part of the review body that reviews the Curriculum. Karlo suggested that the committee put together a working group to work on the recommendations and asked if anyone would be interested in joining the group. Kevin Sutton, Karlo Cabrera, Marjolein Winterink, and Co-Chair Omer, Michael Kerr volunteered to be part of the Financial Literacy Working Group. Michael also recommended that Tim McKaskell may want to participate.</p> <p>Karlo reported that staff had connected with the CFO speak to EPAC about TDSB budget. The CFO accepted, and advised that there already is a structure in place to have CFO to make presentations to all Advisory Committees. The dates are confirmed and it was suggested that EPAC pair up with another CAC so that the presentation could be done in pairs. It was suggested that EPAC select a date that is further away as newer budget information would be available. Karlo reported that the following dates were available: May 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Karlo will find out the specifics of the motion and email it to the group. The FLWG will meet to review the Grade 11/12 Financial Literacy Curriculum and will come up with recommendations. They will report back at the next EPAC meeting. The recommendations will then go to the May PSSC meeting.</li> <li>▪ Karlo will look into the possibility of pairing up with ICAC, ACAC on May 28<sup>th</sup>, or May 30<sup>th</sup>, and look into Thursdays as options.</li> </ul>
<p>5.) Report on Deputation (Process and Questions from Trustees)</p>	<p>Rahma reported on the Deputation that she and Co-Chair Penrose attended on Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 4:30pm. The Deputation Working Group (Michael, Lea, Co-Chair Penrose, Trustee Rodrigues, Karlo) worked on pulling the deputation together. The deputation was well received by Trustees. Trustees had some questions in terms of next steps for EPAC, and had some really strong recommendations on how they as a committee could be influential at the provincial level. Rahma reported that the labour issue regarding cutting young, diverse teachers was reported in the Toronto Star. The group hopes to continue to build relationships with Trustees so that they can understand recommendations.</p> <p>Motion to extend the meeting at 8:45 pm for another 15 minutes was approved.</p>	
<p>6.) Next Steps on Future Deputation and Deputation Work Group</p>	<p>The Deputation Work Group includes (Michael, Lea, Co-Chair Penrose, Trustee Rodrigues, and Karlo). Saida(SPLC) confirmed that she wants to join this group.</p>	
<p>7.) Director's Report</p>	<p>Director Quan said that she was pleased to receive this invitation. She made the following comments regarding her vision for Equity and Inclusive Schools in her report to EPAC, and answered some questions based on the comments/questions raised by members. EPAC has been in existence for 12 years. Director Quan asked whether we are influential as a group to change the pathway, and the trajectory for students and asked how she can as the Director to support EPAC?</p> <p>When we talk about Equity and Inclusion, Director Quan expressed that there is a societal dislocation that exists; many who just don't get the chance to get the same opportunities. The bottom line is that society is uneven, and that census results will support that. She</p>	

noted the following concerns affecting our city and TDSB, and some possible opportunities.

- 4% of Aboriginal students are in prisons, male and young women
- Migrant workers, helping new immigrants coming to Toronto, looking for employment.
- 53% of students come from families earning less than \$48,000
- Major issue is crisis in public education. We've had people flee out of City
- There is cause for concern of program flight.
- TCDSB enrolment is increasing while TDSB enrolment is decreasing
- Public education is not meeting needs. How relevant is public education? What is it that we are going to do differently?
- Policies and procedures around gender is a real issue of opportunity.

We need to look at what it is we will do tomorrow? When we talk about Integrity & Leadership, what is it that we do when no one is looking? Director Quan reported that the Board is developing a 4 year Annual Operating Plan to address the Achievement Gap with Aboriginal, Somali, Black, Hispanic, and Middle Eastern students. We need to capture the hearts of parents; the school system can't do it alone.

#### Questions/Comments:

- This affects whole family socially, emotionally. When you raise your child, education is the only chance they have to survive. Changes have to happen now. We have a lot of resources to make that difference. We can turn around our children from failing. Certain specific points need to connect to make students successful.
- Teachers need training. Need to determine exactly what these needs are? Teachers need to treat children with respect.
- Policies and Procedures must be in place to protect students. Need to determine who holds staff accountable? Teachers do so much training in equity & diversity. If they don't put that into practice, how will they see the benefit of it in schools? Teachers who are telling kids that they are not going to learn is unacceptable, and that needs to change.
- Trustee Rodrigues reported that Director Quan is equity conscious, a true believer and supporter of the Portuguese, Aboriginal, and Somali Task Forces. Yesterday's report was about "Accountability, working to make the Board continue to be accountable including providing training, and workshops for teachers, to have guest speakers, etc. so there will not be any barriers.
- Every group should exist to have influence on another body (e.g. Settlement Workers). We have to be a broker. We need to look at how we can make links to agencies. How do we open doors in that way?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The challenge is finding someone with empathy as well as with passion, commitment, and heart about relationships. We are moving towards a more empathetic culture, one that is kind and caring.</li> <li>▪ The fastest increase in students is the mixed race students. The concept of dualism is important. Our children are living in mixed society. Equity and inclusion not just about race.</li> <li>▪ Need to change 3 things at no cost; 1.) Change culture effectively (biases, prejudices, which exist day to day. Be outspoken, and a vocal champion on gender based equity tools for change. 2.) Survey - cut and paste demographics sections to applications to track learning outcomes, to create system capacity, and 3.) Best way to ensure empathy is to have it be a part of annual review process.</li> <li>▪ Invite Tim Wise back (Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, International Human Rights day.)</li> <li>▪ Overlooked points are beyond socio-economic levels. The biggest barriers are not completely fixed until the student believes that the equity issues are resolved.</li> <li>▪ If flight issue goes unaddressed, what does TDSB look like in years to come? How does this committee influence what happens in the TDSB and what goes on in wider society? The Urban Alliance on Race Relations would be pleased to partner regarding understanding the budget process.</li> <li>▪ Saida (SPLC) expressed that if you look at African students, there is no equity in TDSB. SPLC is part of the Task Force. Saida always has input, and 4 years ago put forth recommendations. We want TDSB to listen to us. Want one big group. We can sit with TDSB to fix what is wrong with our students. Kids are dropping out at grade 11, why not at grade 10, 8?</li> </ul>	
<p>8.) Creation of Work Group for TOR – Gather group to review and bring forward any recommendations. Goal: to update and finalize TOR by June 2013.</p>	<p>Co-Chair Penrose said that he was hoping to pull together a T.O.R. Working Group to work on Terms of Reference, and is hoping to have the work group come back with recommendations by May. Will be sending out the details via e-mail. Anyone interested in being part of this group is asked to come forward. Trustee Rodrigues, Augustre Munroe, Kowser Omer, Sharon Simpson (from a Labour perspective), and Chris (from a Financial Literacy perspective) volunteered to be part of this group.</p> <p>Karlo reminded everyone that the last copy (which was circulated via e-mail and handed out) did have some recommendations. It was according to the guidelines provided by Michelle Munroe, and the CAC handbook. It was confirmed that Unions are welcome to be part of the CAC, but do not have the right to vote.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The TOR Working Group will review the recommendations in the T.O.R. and report back at the next meeting.</li> </ul>
<p>9.) Trustee Report</p>	<p>Trustee Rodrigues reported that Trustees met last night to discuss the Staff Allocations Report. There is a \$55M deficit. It will cost \$9-10M for FDK. It's great for the children but we are underfunded. There was major discussion last night. After 3 hours of debates, the proposed cuts equal \$27M. 14 different items were proposed to be cut. Cuts were passed in the proposal. This could change in April due to new info from the GSN (Grants for Students Needs) that becomes available. We have to give people sufficient note according</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Linda will prepare a Committee Report and forward it to Board Services for addition to the April 4<sup>th</sup> PSSC meeting.</li> </ul>

	<p>to the Collective Agreement. We are currently in waiting mode with the Province. New Provincial government is not giving us a break at the moment. Community Consultations are happening through Ward Forums. The budget has been the most important item of discussion.</p> <p>Karlo reported that on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, a session on the Participatory Budget Process is open to everyone.</p> <p>Co-Chair Penrose asked why there was a rush in notification regarding the Participatory Budget Meeting, and why it was not streamed on-line to allow for participation via Twitter. Superintendent Spyropoulos reported that the notification was provided by the Business Services Department and was not sure why that happened. Only 2 days notice was given. It was sent out on the Friday afternoon before, and the meeting was on Tuesday. PIAC raised concerns as well and some parents were insulted. The Participatory Budget meeting was not well attended. The point of the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting was to look at budget info; of which now 67% is now complete. PIAC moved a motion that two weeks' notice be given to committee members. Superintendent Spyropoulos advised members to put forward a similar motion.</p> <p><b>***MOTION ***</b>Michael put forward a motion that a minimum of two weeks' notice be given to parents and community members for participation in the Participatory Budget Process, and that it be stream-lined via twitter, and other social media in order to provide a fair, and inclusive process and participation for anyone interested in being part of the process. Margaret Blair-Grant seconded the motion, all approved.</p>	
10.) Staff Report	<p>With respect to the Budget Deputation that Rahma and Co-Chair Penrose did, Superintendent Spyropoulos thanked them, and commended them for a job well done for their sharing their voices in the media. It was well received.</p> <p>Marjolin reported that the province is soon having a budget consultation. Members can go on their website to find out when it is.</p>	
11.) Other Business ▪ Equity Forum	<p>Michael will connect with Co-Chairs and staff regarding the Equity Forum on April 20<sup>th</sup>, and invite Maria Yau to speak at the Forum.</p>	<p>Michael will report back at the next meeting.</p>
12.) Adjournment	<p>The meeting was adjourned at 9:04pm. Approved by consensus.</p>	
13.) Next Meeting	<p>The next meeting date is Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm, Boardroom, 5050 Yonge St.</p>	<p>Linda will send out a communication regarding the next meeting.</p>