

**Toronto District School Board  
Early Years Advisory Committee - EYAC  
Terms of Reference  
Draft –Spring 2012**

**1. TDSB Community Advisory Committees**

- a. Community advisory committees are established 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.
- b. A community advisory committee may advise the board on a matter specifically requested by the Board, or may advise the Board on matters of its own choosing.
- c. A community advisory committee may choose to exercise an advocacy role, i.e. it may choose to indicate to the Board a preferred position on an educational issue under consideration by the Board, on the understanding that the position has been established through a fair and democratic process of deliberation and decision-making among the CAC membership.
- d. When a community advisory committee has presented advice to the Board, there is no obligation on the part of the Board or its staff to accept the advice.

**2. EYAC Mandate**

- a. An Early Years Advisory Committee (EYAC) will be established and maintained to provide advice to the Board on matters concerning the implementation of the Early Years policy, and to identify issues of broad community interest concerning Early Years programs, for the consideration of the Board and staff; (adopted by Board September, 2005);
- b. To suggest improvements to the Early Years policy;
- c. To provide an opportunity to explore the concept of Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) with community agencies and groups;
- d. To consider the work of other initiatives within the Board as they impact on Early Years, e.g., Full-Day Kindergarten, Special Education, Model Schools for Inner Cities, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres.

### **3. Membership**

- a. EYAC is comprised of representatives of recognized organizations and networks across Toronto that provide service to young children and families; parent members; designated TDSB staff and trustee(s) appointed by the Board.
- b. Community representatives may include, for example: child care centres, Toronto First Duty Projects, family support programs (Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Ontario Early Years Centres), children’s mental health centres, and community colleges.
- c. City representatives from Toronto Children’s Services, Toronto Public Health, Parks Forestry and Recreation and Toronto Library Services may be invited to participate.
- d. Alternate members may be appointed. Only the member or alternate (but not both) may vote. Observers are welcome to attend but are not permitted to vote.

### **4. Committee Structure and Term of Office**

- a. The Board will appoint one Trustee as Co-Chair and EYAC will select one community member as Co-Chair. The trustee co-chair and community co-chair have equal status with regard to agenda setting, meeting management, and role as the EYAC spokesperson. The co-chairs mutually agree upon specific division of responsibilities.
- b. The selection process for co-chairs will be conducted every two years to coincide with the term of office for community members. The term of office for community members will be two years.
- c. The role of community co-chair may be shared between two members with the approval of the committee or a vice-chair may be elected/appointed to assist the community co-chair in their role with the approval of the committee.
- d. Should members be unable to fulfil their terms, a member may step down and EYAC can appoint a replacement.
- e. Members who are absent for three consecutive meetings may be asked to resign or appoint an alternate.

- f. Trustees who are not members of EYAC have the right to attend and participate in discussions but do not have voting privileges.

## **5. Quorum**

- a. Quorum is 50% of the membership (co-chairs and community members) plus one.
- b. Should a quorum not be present within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the formal meeting is cancelled. Members present may decide to hold an informal meeting for discussion purposes only and informal notes may be taken, but no minutes will be taken and no decisions made. Members should send regrets if they are unable to attend. If the number of regrets received before the meeting means that quorum will not be reached, the meeting will be cancelled.

## **6. Meetings**

- a. Meetings will be held quarterly and at times convenient to the majority of members. Members may participate by electronic means (conference call) subject to TDSB requirements. (See Community Advisory Committee Handbook.)
- b. Occasional meetings may be held by conference call, if necessary.
- c. Workgroups, if required, may meet more frequently.

## **7. Agenda and Minutes**

- a. The schedule of meetings will be established in advance and posted.
- b. It is the responsibility of the co-chairs, in consultation with the staff resource, to determine the items on the agenda and the order. The staff resource person will provide items that have been referred by the Board.
- c. The agenda will be posted and circulated two weeks prior to the meeting date to allow members sufficient time to review and suggest agenda items
- d. Approved minutes of meetings and background information will be posted and circulated no later than one week prior to next meeting date
- e. The schedule of meetings, committee agenda and minutes of meetings will be posted at: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/community/>

## **8. Staff Resource**

- a. The Director will designate staff as non-voting resource persons to assist the co-chairs with activities related to committee meetings, such as: developing the agenda, providing information, and keeping the committee informed on matters relevant to the committee mandate.
- b. The Board will provide clerical assistance to assist with the production and maintenance of agendas, minutes and committee reports.

## **9. Decision making**

Decisions will be made by consensus or by a majority vote of members in attendance, when necessary.

## **10. Communicating Advice to the Board or Staff**

Advice may take the form of formal recommendations approved by a decision of the committee and presented in a committee report to the applicable standing committee of the Board (Program School Services Committee). Informal feedback may be shared in a separate committee document or recorded in the minutes of meetings.

## **11. Requests for Information**

EYAC may request information directly from staff. Staff may determine which requests for information may be accommodated and the timelines for doing so, and which requests require the approval by the Board or Director of Education.

## **12. Networking:**

EYAC is free to establish its own communication network among itself and to participate in joint or collective activities relevant to its role.