

Inner City Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday February 7th, 2013
5050 Yonge St. Committee Room A
9:30AM-12:30PM

In attendance	Nathan Gilbert, Bob Spencer, Marjolein Winterink, Janice Gillespie, Graham Hollings, Vicky Branco, Manon Gardner, Monica Etzler, Lesley Johnston, Sharlene Bourjot, Chris Penrose, Howard Kaplan, David Clandfield, Sheila Cary- Meaher, Aim Mujib, Maria Yao. Kwabena Yafeu, Laurie Green.
Regrets	George Martell, Jane Delbeek, Kendra Kerr, Clarissa Chandler, Nancu Goldman, Alejandra Bravo, Cheryl Skovronek, Donna Quan.
Staff	Vicky Branco, Manon Gardner, Briony Glassco
Guests	Elli Avishai

Action Items coming out of this meeting

1. Elli Avishai from Rotman will send info to Coordinator to send around.
2. ICAC Coordinator to send out new time and place for the next meeting.
3. ICAC Coordinator to find out which trustees have been newly assigned to which standing committees and mail that cast list around.
4. Lesley Johnston and the ICAC coordinator will work on a letter to share experiences of deputing on standing committees and feeling disrespected.
5. ICAC Coordinator will send out a call for more members to join the special education committee

1. Welcome and introductions

Ellie Avisai runs the Ithink program at the Rotman school of Management at the University of Toronto. They have been running a successful program at John Polanyi secondary school and she invited ICAC members to a workshop on Friday February the 15th, which will introduce integrated thinking to Educators.

ACTION ITEM: - Elli Avishai from Rotman will send the info to Coordinator to send around.

2. Agenda approval

Next meeting is Thursday March 6th but this poses a conflict for Trustees.

MOTION: To look into moving the meeting to the same time the day after on to the Thursday Morning at an available location. Trustee Kaplan moved, seconded by J. Gillespie.

Agenda moved as amended by N. Gilbert, seconded by D. Clandfield; approved unanimously

ACTION ITEM: ICAC Coordinator to send out new time and new place of the next ICAC meeting.

3. January 10 Minutes approval

J. Gillespie moved as per following amendments: (i) page three under Lesley Johnson, Some schools raise up to \$ 250,000 dollars, (ii) some other small typo type amendments,

Seconded by L. Johnston. Approved Unanimously

4. ICAC Coordinator report

The ICAC is trying to review the ICAC membership list and make it more current. We are also looking to making our current sub-committees more robust and establishing a succession or governance committee.

1. Chris Penrose- Youth Action Plan and next steps

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/english/topics/youthandthelaw/youthactionplan/ya p.aspx>

This plan is a commitment from the Provincial Government and housed under the Ministry of Child and Youth Services in response to the gun violence the GTS experienced last summer. Since it was established there have been a number of pieces that we are rolling out. There is a program of youth employment delivered by the Toronto Police Services employing youth that are still in school. Students in the program are being paid for up to 10 hours of work a week. Young people are earning a wage as well

as getting valuable employment experience. The Toronto Police Service (TPS) was given the green light to start this program in the Fall of 2012. They experienced a rocky start as they did not have previous experience employing young people in part-time work who were also trying to succeed in school.

The second part of the action plan was to extend the Summer Jobs for Youth program throughout the year. Tropicana ran the Summer program. There has been a call for proposals to select a new agency to run this program, after it was decided not to extend Tropicana's contract. Jobs will not be expected to be offered to students until April 2013, and the plan is to roll out the program fully in September of 2013.

There will be a lot of young people who will be employed around the city. To date, a lot of the funding and focus has been around policing, and there appears to be a lot of trust for the police to play a role in the youth violence issues; a level of trust that has not been bestowed on the community agencies and organizations – especially grassroots – that run similar programs. Deputy Peter Sloly, the community face for the TPS is trying to give out the message that the community plays an important role and that it is not about “arresting their way out of the problem”. There have been a lot of discussion around how these after school jobs should be delivered in a way that provides better training and connects students with more academic support before and after the program.

The City Councillor, Josh Matlow, is pushing for a Youth Strategy from the City of Toronto. If anyone can offer advice on how the youth action plan might roll out he is an important person to connect to. There was a lot of frustration at the beginning of this process as nothing was happening, but it seems that it is starting to move forward now. There is still a danger of it becoming too bureaucratic. For example, it has been a very formidable process to apply for the Youth Outreach Worker positions. So far, the Youth Action Plan doesn't really reach those who might be best suited for the addressing the issues of youth violence. Institutional agencies may be favoured for the jobs in this program. Chris is trying to advocate for more grassroots, unaccredited people, and youth leaders with good ideas to be part of the plan rather than all those positions being absorbed by the formal agencies. We still need to keep the pressure on.

Question: The Ministry has appointed an advisory committee that will review this and it is made up of young people?

A: There are a number of advisory committees and youth planning tables planned, they aren't active yet.

Comment: a new group is For Youth Initiative (FYI) and the anti-violence task force.

A: That is more connected to collective impact work and looks to be potentially more successful. In the past, there have been a lot of these sorts of initiatives that get absorbed by people at the table rather than individuals in the community. FYI is really challenging that precedent.

Lesley: I am wondering about the Focus on Youth.

Chris: They are expanding the program, and students can start applying next week. United way is giving \$10,000 grants to organizations that can take on student placements and run programming for youth. Continuing Ed is involved in the conversation too: How do they offer the dual credit co-op to more youth employed in Focus on Youth? It is great to see all these partners meeting together regularly. The Toronto and Catholic Boards and United Way and others. The silos are breaking down.

<http://www.torontosun.com/2013/02/12/councillor-josh-matlow-calls-for-toronto-youth-violence-strategy>

Bob Spencer- IL proposal from Jim Cummings

Some of you have been involved in this language debate for years. Some think it is just a language debate but it isn't. Jim Cummins recommends we open up the integrated day program to some of our schools and integrate it with the social justice requirements of these schools. We need students to use their own home language in the school system, using the home and other languages to connect to their learning. This fits with our understanding of schools as a community hub.

Everyone has seen the document from J. Cummings. Bob will send out some background documents on this. He encouraged anyone who is interested to join the international Languages subcommittee.

Question: Do you have a one-page summary of the benefits? At parent meetings when they are being consulted on budget this could be an important addition to the discussions, there is a real way to save money through these initiatives.

David Clandfield is looking at schools that work as community hubs around the world, almost everywhere they found a successful school they found a multi-lingual school. Language is a vital part of connecting a school to the community.

5. Presentation from Maria Yau: Building on our research from the Model School Program

Maria focused on three main points:

- The research model that we are using for the model schools,
- CAT4 and impacts
- The historical and recent findings.

We do research for model schools because it is one of the 5 essential components of model schools. In the Model Schools for Inner City task force report, it was recommended that all research be both formative and Summative. Formative, in that it helps to inform planning and develop and address the ongoing needs of students. In many model and TDSB schools the demographics are changing quickly. We have to have a reliable way to audit the changing needs of our students. We also use the data to monitor the schools' progress and the students' advancement. We use the research to inform school improvement.

The research also needs to be summative. This is an expensive program and it is essential that we are both responsible and transparent. We need to present our findings regularly to support the existence and the future of the program.

We conduct multi-year research and review plans. All the model schools have a research toolkit that is updated every 2 years. We emphasize that we are searching for multiple outcomes by looking at the whole school, the whole student: looking at students, parents, the community and the broader community. For students we measure academic, physical and emotional well-being and resiliency.

By conducting multiple measures, both quantitative and qualitative, and multi year data sources, we are able to monitor growth over time.

Data sources There are existing internal resources like Education, Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), learning Opportunity Index (LOI) and the StatCan Census. There are Parent Surveys: the Resiliency Survey and the annual Early Development Instrument (EDI). We also try to use external resources, City of Toronto, independent researchers, contextual data, input process data, outcome and performance data. All these pieces produce an interim report used to inform the schools decision making. It is a very rich document and the principals love it.

Academic Process, Measures (1)

Data, it's all in how you read it.....

EQAO – Some years ago, EQAO results were compared over two consecutive years and it was thought that this showed that the model school program was failing. The EQAO tests children in grades 3 and 6. Comparing two consecutive years did not compare the same two cohorts of students.

As a result of this confusion the Support and Research team wrote a fact sheet about why we can't use EQAO alone to judge anything. The intent of the EQAO is to provide a snapshot. It is not a measure. It cannot work over time. Even when you compare a grade 3 classes' EQAO results and then those grade 6's, 3 year later, it is not accurate. as the student makeup changes due to attrition and intake.

See the **attached Can EQAO results determine school success?**

http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/parents/parent_groups/docs/CanEQAOResultsDetermineSchoolSuccess10.pdf

Report cards: this information is also factored into the interim report but teachers' assessments reveal subjectivity and inconsistency in marking so we can never rely on report cards alone.

DRA and the Comprehension, Attitude, Strategies, Interests (**CASI**) that measure grades 4-8 literacy comprehension. None of these is sufficient on their own.

CAT4 is the other point in this triangulation. We use it as an additional objective measure. CAT4 gives us the Canadian Norm.

The test looks at reading, writing and math but looks at foundation or basic skills, considered necessary for the respective grades. The test is available for all grades.

We conduct the CAT4 at the beginning of each school year, in September. Most importantly, the test measures the annual progress of the same students over a long period of time.

Comparing the national averages to students results at Nelson Mandela school over grades 4-6 we can see that slowly they got better, their improvement accelerated.

This marks the rate of acceleration.

Question: Is the test given at the end of grade 6 as well?

Answer: At the beginning we did but now we have so many schools we can't afford it.

Across Canada they do a sample of students to find the norm. That doesn't mean they test the same kids each year. We test all our kids every year. We can see how quickly individual students improve or what they are struggling with.

What this showed, was that even though our EQAO results were low, the CAT4 confirmed that the students were already starting 2 years behind their peers across the country. EQAO tests higher level thinking, but we forgot that with all our new Canadians we still needed a foundation test. We now unpack this data and can go back to individual schools to point out that this or that student needs help to fill a gap in their learning. It gives teachers much more information that they use to plan effectively.

Question: Are we also tracking the kids with an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

Answer: We let kids with IEPs write the CAT 4 using the accommodations they need. All that information is integrated into the results. We train the whole staff to let the entire school know why these tests are important and what we can learn from them. We can now apply strategies directly to the needs that present themselves. Also, each parent gets an assessment report.

Answer: We use the CAT 4 to confirm how accurate our other assessment tools are.

Answer: The IEP's include accommodations for writing tests. These are respected. They have to be. In the literature it is sometimes raised that the fact that we include students who need accommodations should throw the tests into disrepute.

Answer: It is important to recognize that learning accommodations in IEP's are the equivalent to the very dependent relationship I have with my glasses. Without my glasses I can't see a thing. I can't read, I can't write, I can't understand what is being said because I can't see your face across the room. The accommodations act as eyeglasses for students. All they do is allow the child to access their intelligence and answer the questions in the test.

Answer: If we don't accommodate them we aren't getting to their knowledge. If we don't accommodate them they aren't going to show us what they know.

Question: When parents are told about outcomes are they also told about the multiple testing or assessments used?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Is CAT4 a high stakes test?

Answer: Whether a test is high stakes or not is not due to it being a standardized test it is solely due to how that test is used. If you use a test to justify a negative action you are making it a high stakes test. For the Model schools CAT4 has been used as one of the multiple outcome measures. It is actually just used as part of the package. There is not a lot of pressure.

Question: If every year we are trying to maintain funding for model schools and we are using CAT 4 results as part of that conversation then it is a high stakes test.

Answer: We wanted to create a metric that would give the information we all need to justify this program from every angle.

Answer: Accountability is the word we might use instead. We need to know how we are doing, we need to be able to tell the world. And we are showing gains. The gains show that we were at level 1 and now we are at level 2.2. What matters is how far they have come and how quickly even though they are still below grade.

Answer: Eventually this CAT4 will bring out and show to the community that what we are measuring is the incremental change.

How to best use the CAT4?

In the U.S teachers are penalized for reaching or not reaching their testing goals. They have become test-driven. Why do we do the CAT4 in September is because you simply cannot teach to the test. There is very little pressure. It is a one-day event. No time to prep for the test. Teachers are told, once they finish the test to lock it away and we tell them not to even look at the test. It sets a bench-mark for the rest of the year. The test is simply used from then on to monitor growth over the course of that school year.

Test driven teaching creates a situation where the test itself is shaping the delivery of curriculum.

Measuring gaps, do they close?

At Nelson Mandela, our most challenged school, academically they have closed gaps. Their suspension rates are down considerably. The school surveys were used to measure school atmosphere. Including staff. The resiliency survey showed they had higher levels of resiliency than their neighbours

With the cluster of schools of the 150 schools we have now, we are studying the EQAO scores for model schools compared to other TDSB schools, looking at the CAT4's, looking at the most recent data and it takes time. It takes time to change teacher proactively, to support parents. It takes a lot of time and we have to use a lot of different tools. But it is working; the EDI has showed that more children are ready for Kindergarten due to more parent support.

The clinics have had a remarkable effect.

All the above conditions are important for not only closing the achievement gaps but for also avoiding those gaps from widening.

6. Model Schools for Inner Cities Update - MSIC Resource Team

Vicky encourages everyone to have a look at the newsletters. **(Attached)**
http://www.tdsb.on.ca/_site/ViewItem.asp?siteid=263&menuid=37829&pageid=31906

7. ICAC Fundraising Committee Update- Lesley Johnson

The ongoing saga around fundraising the Learning Opportunity Index (LOI) grant. It went to the board, rather than throwing out our motion they tossed it to the Administration, Finance and Accountability Committee (AF&A). They were to meet two weeks ago, but with no quorum, the meeting was cancelled. We are going to return at the next one (February 27th at 4:30 pm) and hope for more informed, well thinking audience. We are trying to figure out if we can alter the motion at this stage. We wanted to ask if a working group could be formed as a result of our motion.

Action item: Lesley and the coordinator will work on a letter to complain about this process being so disrespected.

Lesley read out the original motion.

How can we alter this but at least keep it in play?

There was a healthy discussion around what exactly the LOI supplements are intended for and the disparity between schools access to extra funds.

Answer: A working group that can look at this not in isolation is a good idea. There are so many parts to this piece. With the Equity Polity Advisory Committee (EPAC) we are

inviting Ministry of Education people to the table. We need to speak to Mum and Dad together if we want to sort out our funding. Both the board and the ministry need to be a part of the conversation.

Answer: The LOI/ Fundraising subcommittee will look at the funding issues out there and find more focus. Open it up to new people and see if it needs some renewed focus and energy.

Action Item: ICAC Coordinator to find out which trustees have been newly assigned to which standing committees and mail that cast list around.

8. ICAC Special Education Update- David Clandfield and Laurie Green

A written update was included (Attached) but the discussion was deferred to the next meeting,

Action item: Coordinator will send out a call for more members to the special education committee

9. Review of Community Advisory Committee (CAC) process update

- Laurie Green

A survey is being developed to answer some key questions designed for trustees, staff and CAC members. It should be coming out soon, so expect it

10. Trustee update- Sheila Cary Meagher

Trustee Cary-Meagher had a ward meeting and someone asked her, what is a model school and why is it called a model school? A number of the parents objected to the name.

Answer: A number of people came together and agreed on the name. They didn't want to call them project schools. Admittedly, the term "Inner City" doesn't really make sense in Toronto, but at the time it was the best they could come up with.

In this sense, a model is something for all schools to aspire to. But it is like the semantics around disability; whenever a term becomes negative we change the name. All over the

world these schools are called different things, priority schools etc. Maybe we need to promote our meaning of the word?

**Motion to adjourn, Trustee Kaplan, moved,
second: D. Clandfield; approved unanimously. 12:35 pm**

NEXT MEETING:
Thursday March 7, 2013
Jarvis Collegiate Institute

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Guests are always welcome!