

Inner City Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday January 10, 2013
6:30-8:30PM

George Webster Elementary School

In attendance	Aim Mujib, Sheila Cary-Meaghar, Howard Kaplan, Lesley Johnston, Jann Houston, Laurie Green , Janice Gillespie, Kwabena Yafen,
Regrets	Manon Gardner, Donna Quan, Chris Penrose, George Martell, Michael Shapcott, Nathan Gilbert, Heather Johnson, Sharlene Bourjot, Cheryl, Skovronek, David Clandfield,
Staff	Vicky Branco, Nancy Steinhauer, Terry Doyle
Community Support Workers	Fonda Zettler, Patrick Boland, Catherine Evans, Duane Spencer, Abdi Mohamoud, Zulehka Noormohamed, Colleen Huggins, Waveney Job, Paul Blackwood.
Guests	Ying Ong, Cheryl Cain, Lakshmi Kygo, Cindy Nnabuogor, Fern Kramer, Nortahan Ilora, Ravi Kygonahalu, Heather Tormey, Zulma Velasquez, Moone Haudhuzz, Andrew Holder, John Trafananko (B3 CPAC chair), Michael Morris, Mandy Brow, Dawn Fried, Denise Boland, Natasha Brown, Subba Manohar, Con MacFarlalane, Janet Wright, Rabinya Lulat, Nazerah Shaikh, Patsy Hamilton, Surendran Shanmigan, Shazia Naudid, Jackie, Nancy, Elvis Lopez (CPAC Chair), Mayuka Chen, Allison Charles, Rukshana Sayyada, Saleha Mahmud, Aneesha Patel, Debra P, Basharat Sheibh, Stephanie Hancock Kuhn, Ingrid Palmer, Ron Cameron, Muneer Jam

Action Items coming out of this meeting
1. ICAC Coordinator will make sure everyone gets a copy of these minutes
2. ICAC Coordinator will remind Bob Spencer he will follow up on the David Suzuki Video in February.

The meeting is being videoed. An announcement was made that if anyone did not feel comfortable to be shown on tape, to speak to Aim after the meeting and the communications operator to make sure they would not appear.

1. Welcome and introductions

Central Coordinating Principal, Vicky Branco welcomed all to the school and thanked her staff and introduced them to the room. She explained what the Inner City Advisory Committee (ICAC) is and introduced the School Board Trustees, Sheila Cary-Meaghar and Howard Kaplan. She explained the purpose of the ICAC meetings and the two co-chairs. She thanked ICAC members for advocating for model schools to the board and to their agencies and those members that have done many deputations in support of the Model Schools Program. She introduced Aim Mujib as both a parent of George Webster School and as co-chair of ICAC. Aim took the microphone and thanked George Webster School for hosting. He did some housekeeping and encouraged the room to introduce themselves. Everyone passed the microphone around, they each told us their name and what school they were from. Aim, told us his story about his relationship with George Webster School. How essential the school is during and after school hours, the heart of the community. The person who made this school is its Principal, Nancy Steinhauer!

Principal Steinhauer welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming out and for working together for the better of their children. She thanked the ICAC for making George Webster School a Model School. Ingrid Palmer, the school council co-chair welcomed us all on behalf of the school council.

Ms. Palmer explained the many events and opportunities for parents and students at George Webster including toy lending, a parent room, and how the school fosters a climate of support for all parents and students and community members. She wanted us all to be challenged to inspire and to be inspired.

2. Agenda approval

Trustee Kaplan, moved, Lesley Johnson seconded, all in favour, approved.

3. December 5 Minutes approved

Trustee Kaplan moved, Jann Houston seconded, all in favour. Everyone at this meeting will be sent a copy of the minutes for this meeting and people here are encouraged to be nominated onto the ICAC

Action item: ICAC Coordinator will make sure everyone gets a copy of these minutes

4. Action items from December meeting, updates and committee housekeeping

Vicky Branco took us through the process of following an agenda, we went to Item 4 on the minutes of the December, 2012 meeting where we found the action items follow up,

Bob Spencer has not followed up on the David Suzuki Video but will do so at the Feb meeting

Action item: ICAC Coordinator will remind Bob Spencer he will follow up on the David Suzuki Video in February.

At the February 7th meeting Maria Yau will give a presentation on research done on the Model School students, Canadian Achievement Test 4 (CAT 4)

Chris Penrose will report on Youth Action Plan and next steps

At the March 6th Meeting there will be staff presenting on the Social, Emotional and Physical Health component of the model schools. Manon Gardner will request Sandy Spyropolous to report.

At the March 6th Meeting Craig Snider will report back answering all the questions generated from his fundraising presentations at the Dec 5th meeting.

Lesley Johnston spoke of the research that had been done on overall funding, fees and fundraising; she explained there are two streams of funding coming into schools – one public and one private. There is public money coming into the schools via the School Board from the Ministry of Education. The Learning Opportunity Grant (LOG) is one stream of this public money. The LOG is money that should be spent on levelling the playing field for student opportunities. There is also private money coming into the schools through fees and school and parent council generated fundraising (while some schools also have private fundraising foundations that operate outside the purview of the school, not to mention corporate partnerships). Some schools raise many thousands of dollars (i.e \$250,000) and some \$0. Parent generated fundraising is meant to be for the purpose of enhancing the learning experience of students – not to pay for basic educational needs, such as computers or textbooks. Seeing as some school councils are able to enhance the learning experience of their students well beyond that of other schools and seeing that only about 1/3 of the LOG is actually being spent as it was intended – to level the playing field, the ICAC Fees and Fundraising Sub-Committee has been going out and meeting with schools, doing research and putting forward motions to the board to explore funding alternatives that would better achieve equity. It is great news that the Board wants to continue that conversation. Right now we have a motion before the Board to explore greater equity in funding to better support the needs of inner city schools.

At the February 7th meeting the Motions that George Martell put forward in December will be reviewed and re-crafted. This will also allow for discussion and input by committee.

Questions arising from the advertising presentation:

Susan Wakutz will bring the completed policy with recommendation back to ICAC when this consultation process is over. Report on the results of the national survey on advertising which were requested.

Links to CBC about George Webster on both TV and on metro Morning. And in the Globe and Mail were shared

CBC News Story www.cbc.ca/player/news/id/2315175036

Metro Morning: www.cbc.ca/video/news/audioplayer.html?slipid=2315171770

The Globe and Mail on tele-psychiatry offered at Model schools:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/toronto-students-to-get-psychiatric-help-through-video-conferencing/article4103591/>

Lesley Johnson had asked for deputations for the city budget

Laurie Green gave an update on the review being established by the Trustees of all the TDSB advisory committees.

She explained that this group consisted of Trustees, staff and a representative from each one of the 12 advisory committees. The trustees have decided to look at all the committees to better support them and to address their funding and resources. A sub group will be working to devise a list of questions to ask advisory committee members, people at the school board who may rely on being “advised” and those represented by the advisory Committees such as parents.

5. Model Schools for Inner Cities update

Presented by Vicky Branco and the Model Schools team. We watched a power point. **(attached)** “At Model schools for Inner Cities we really talk about equity and we try to make sure that we find out and understand what each community needs and then work out how to meet those needs. Model schools are equitable, meaning they providing programming and funds to those schools that need it in order for all kids to have choices as they grow. The model schools structure has 5 essential components, staff and funding. Each cluster has one lead teacher, two teaching and learning coaches. Three Community Support Workers and one central coordinating principal” (Vicky Branco)

Stephanie a lead teacher in Cluster A1 explained to us what she does. She introduced us to **Gandhi’s Glasses** written and illustrated by both students and teachers. This book encourages global citizenship using Mahatma Gandhi’s life and work as an introduction to social justice for elementary school students. Have a look for this book in your school library. Vicky went on to explain all the different programs and services in the Model schools.

The third component of the Model Schools for Inner Cities is that each school should be the heart of the community. Parents and community members should feel welcomed and

embraced by the school. Model schools for Inner Cities has an action team for partnerships, to get everyone to sit down and design what kind of programming would help our kids succeed best.

The Fourth component is research and review. We use the resources of the equity toolkit, Model School Surveys and the Canadian Achievement Test 4 (CAT 4) and resiliency surveys. The final component is that The Model School Program shares best practices with other countries, jurisdictions and at education conferences. They also work closely with The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. At this point the Model Schools for Inner Cities brochure was been passed around with the 2013, first term newsletter. In this issue different partners were interviewed to discover what their experiences were of model schools, students, parents, principals etc.

6. Model schools for Inner Cities Parent Academy update

The Cluster Parent Academy Committee (CPAC) representatives from A1, A2 and B3 were invited up to the front of the room to be a part of a panel to speak about their achievements and challenges in their different clusters. Vicky reminded us of that CPACs are the Parent Academy and the chairs introduced themselves.

Andrew Holder from Willow Park in cluster A1

Elvis Lopez from cluster A2

Shazia Naud, a parent from Bliss Carman in cluster A2

John Traffenanko from cluster B3

They have a power point, (attached)

Andrew Holder, CPAC Chair of Cluster A1

“ I’ve enjoyed being the chairperson for the A1 Cluster. I was asked by my principal to consider the position and, as a father of two daughters, I felt it was important for them to have a male role model in a position of leadership doing something to try to make their lives better. I have seen much change as a result. Last year, we did some surveys to ask parents what was most important to them and what they might want to learn, and they came up with literacy and behavior. The educator Bill Whipple ran a conference on behaviour; he shared a lot of techniques to empower parents. We all know what a bad parent looks like but what does a great parent look like? We had a group of teachers come in and teach us all about literacy and what we could do from home and learn how to see what our kids are doing, how to identify problems, how to speak up. Looking forward, we’ve had another survey done and it’s shown that the parents to want hear from more speakers, more guests to come in more often. We’ve decided to address school use of technology, smart boards, and computers, also, we want to look at parent engagement, communication between home and school, how to use the agendas more often. As well as finding out about the sleeping habits of kids, how to get them to sleep, how to follow routines. We now know that as a group of parents, we can make a difference. It was a parent, who questioned how much homework kids were getting, because he kept asking

questions and now we have a homework policy. As a result of one parent speaking up and raising the issue! We can make a difference. Sharing values and cultural habits, sharing ideas and work habits and knowledge of different cultures to understand where we are all coming from. We need to continue to strengthen parent groups so parents can feel safe to speak out. At Eastview public school, there was a cultural event to promote native culture and that was wonderful!”

Shazia with the assistance of Moone, her interpreter. Cluster A2

“Welcome everyone. I want to talk about parents who have a language problem. I have one. I came here 2010 in Canada. I have 4 kids. They started in Cedar Drive Public School. My kids were doing well and then I had an accident and my kids did very badly. My daughter was being bullied and, because of my sickness, I couldn’t help her until it was too late. I couldn’t do what I wanted for my daughter. I attended a council meeting and got an interpreter in the school and I started volunteering. I tried to understand how the school works and how to check homework and understand more about everything. I tried to get onto the school council and attend the meetings because I wanted to get more involved. We have all opened accounts at the bank and I feel my kids are like a bank and I am feeding them and supporting them and saving for the future. I started culture and barbeque nights at the school to bring many parents together. Parents shared their experiences with each other. I thought parents would understand that if they wanted to be successful they should be involved in the council. I know that taxi services, child minding services and interpreters make all the difference to bringing parents out and feeling welcomed and helping them to understand the school system. I have used taxis, interpreters and child minding services* and now I am doing very well in school council. Because I want all parents to work together to share each other’s problems. I want everyone to get involved, and for all these services to be continued. Because of my illness I have a bad memory but my concern for my kids is never forgotten. I want to ask everyone who is healthy and has a good memory how anyone could forget to be concerned for their children.”

* Funded by the Model Schools For Inner Cities Program.

Elvis Lopez, CPAC Chair of cluster A2

Elvis has three daughters, and as they are integrating into the schools system so is he. He was invited to speak about Cluster A2. At the beginning of the term he was elected chair of his cluster. Previously they had done over 600 surveys so he collected them all and graphed them all out to give the parent committee some guidance. The graph made the topics of interest very clear to the group. Feedback from 1000 parents really was impactful. One of the most popular topics was supporting the child’s learning. Surprising though, was the need for support with employment. Cluster A2 is now getting their workshops started. 400 parents wanted leadership and communication skills. Besides addressing child’s learning they also want CPR and first aid. Along with employment and training, they want info on starting your own business. They saw how fitting it was that parents were interested in these topics. Elvis can see that by being involved in this group parents are using and learning communication skills and working on their language and public speaking. Recent immigrants have a place where they can stand up and speak their

minds, sometime for the first time in their lives. This is a great first step, we also encourage everyone to participate, and everything that can help the parents will help the children. Over fifty percent of anything we do is communication. The parents are picking this up and progressing, the meek parent suddenly is roaring forward with ideas. As chair I try to give everyone the chance to speak and to articulate their thoughts and to respect differences. Employment and development of skills, again the communication piece, is huge and the benefits will be long lasting.

John Trafananko, CPAC Chair, cluster B3

“Last year we did an education week offering certification in food handling and first aid as well as workshops in how to navigate the TDSB system, and reading with your child. This year we want to repeat those courses and workshops but add in others, possibly a nutrition program or one on successful grant writing. We feel the most important thing is building capability in our parents and to have our programs reflect that. We did our parent workshops both in the afternoon and evening. We had Cathy Dandy give the keynote address. Attendance could have been a little better, but some of our advertising was short notice. Still we had over 100 parents participate. Our plan this year is to not do a separate conference for our cluster, but to throw our support behind the PLAN conference "Because I'm a Girl" (<https://becauseiamagirl.ca/>). We intend to work on creating some of the parent led modules in the conference. We are also working with Young Women on the Move (<http://youngwomenonthemove.org/>). With every program we run we strive for it be parent led learning. Workshops on technology or how to set up a school web site will be topics at our next meeting. We want parents involved in choosing the topics, as well as leading or presenting those topics. Even if a parent wants to contribute by simply giving a summary of an article they've read, that would be great. There are so many ways to contribute.

“I also want to tell you about some of our challenges. By overcoming our challenges we will become stronger. Some of them are:

“Lack of continuity in our audience is a problem. We have the largest geographical area of all the clusters. Our schools are very far apart from one another and as a result there are new faces at each meeting. That is a real challenge. How can we match the needs when the needs and the people change each month?

“Also, we would like to ask that the CPAC handouts and materials be written in more accessible and understandable plain language. We want to make our CPAC more inclusive and collective. Less use of words like “voting” and “electing” and “representing” which can intimidate many families and turn them away. We have had some very popular programs, a program on sleep and routines by the residents at Sick kids and the four measurements, CAT4, Parent Surveys, Resiliency Surveys, EQAO. We want everyone to come. Just let us know. Come and join!

In terms of maintaining successful CPAC governance the phrase “it's not right for me” is hard to work with. We are constantly trying to change and that is impossible. We have had a lot of executive turnover, no long range planning, so we feel like an island. Solutions, long range planning, the first three meetings should be planned by June. I

would really like to connect with the other chairs to trouble shoot and share some ideas and best practices.

7. Trustee update- Sheila Cary Meagher

“The purpose of the CPACs is not for parents to help the school it is for parents to help parents, for community development. This might not include teaching learning it might be getting a safe food handling certificate instead. The scope is wide. You are all very different and the school board is servicing the school as a whole through the community. Dream and want bigger. Go for it. “

“Today is a sad day. Our much loved but very human director resigned and for all of us this is a very sad thing. We don’t know what is going to happen in the future. In the short term there will be an interim director. None of you will have your elementary children in school tomorrow.” Schools re-opened at 6:30 am the next day.

Question from Nazerah Shaikh at Gateway P.S. “Our LOI fluctuates every two years. How can you assure us that my school will stay a model school? I really want to commit to this program but how long will it last for in my school?”

Answer: Sheila: “Speak to your trustee, if we are to re-evaluate every 3 years, according to the Board then that is what we do. Unfortunately it is the nature of the beast. The best you can do is to talk to the trustee.”

Question: From Nazerah Shaikh, “The LOI is not calculated in a very clear way and I don’t know if I agree with the data. “

Answer: Laurie Green: “The most specific answer re: an individual school's movement on the LOI with each calculation could be given by Rob Brown, one of the TDSB researchers responsible for the calculation of the LOI. He has the deconstructed data. Prior to this iteration of the LOI, it was composed of different variables which included mobility, immigration status and housing. These were all dropped from the last LOI because of their relatively low correlation with student achievement. The variables which continue to be used are: income (3 different measures), parent education and single parent status. Have a look at this question and answer sheet on the school board web site: http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/about_us/external_research_application/docs/LOI_2011.pdf

You are in the model school program for the duration of the evaluation period. For the whole three years. They can’t pull the program from your school overnight.”

Vicky Branco: “What we do offer the graduated school is we give many of the resources that you had with model schools. You are still in CPAC. We do try to sustain the schools as best we can.”

Nazareen, “The opportunity gave me a chance to design something specific for our CPAC. The sustainability is great, our food handling course has meant that we are making food on site and selling it to the teachers!”

Trustee Cary-Meagher: “There is no box, don’t think outside it, just think!”

Vicky introduces Anne Kerr: she is retired and coming back to meetings we love her. She was working at the board for 40 years and now she comes to see what we are doing and is so inspired. She is working for the ministry on a parent program and has come to observe CPACs in action.

Principal Kwabena Yafen from Elia middle school, from the far west is also here as an alternate member for ICAC!

AIM wraps up. He thanks Mandy and Ingrid the two co-chairs of George Webster School for hosting.

There is a flyer going around that mentioned a workshop at Duke Of Connaught addressing sexual health for youth. (Details below) Parents of grade six and up take note of upcoming workshop at Duke of Connaught PS on January 16th:

Duke of Connaught School Council, with support from Model Schools TDSB presents:

*“Sexual Health for You(th)”
by Malca Gaffe, Toronto Public Health*

*Parents are invited to attend the presentation on
Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at 7 pm
Duke of Connaught PS
70 Woodfield Rd.
in the Staffroom (2nd floor Woodfield bldg.)*

*Our children face a tough road as teens. It’s tough for parents too. This workshop is for parents of children gr. 6 & up and will give you the tools to talk about some of the important issues our teens will face.
Put yourself on the same page with your child.*

Start the conversation now. It’s not too early.

Refreshments will be served.

**Motion to adjourn, Vice Principal Terry Doyle, moved,
second: Trustee Cary-Meagher. 8:35 pm**

NEXT MEETING:
Thursday February 7, 2013
5050 Yonge St. Committee Room A
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Guests are always welcome!

