

**Transcription of ICAC FFS Consultation with Ministry of Education Representatives**  
**June 7, 2011**  
**Fairmeadow Centre**  
**11 am – 12:30 pm**

- ICAC Co-ordinator reviews reference materials for meeting:
- Ministry of Education (MoE) Draft Policy Guidelines on Fundraising
- ICAC Fees and Fundraising Sub-committee (ICAC FFS) Briefing Note
  
- Greetings from ICAC Community Co-chair, Mr. Aim Mujib, to MoE Finance officials, ICAC members, and guests (parents, staff, students, trustees)
- Mr. Mujib welcomes Jeanette Robinson from the Ministry of Education, Business and Finance Division, and asks her to introduce her colleagues
- Jeanette Robinson, Senior Finance Analyst, Andrew Davis, Director of the Division, and Jack Nigro, Education Officer at the MoE
  
- **Director Andrew Davis:** pleasure to be here, second visit here, and we hope you invite us for a third consultation – first one involved feedback regarding school fees, second visit (today), fundraising, upcoming consultation on corporate sponsorships
- Here to listen and we are currently trying to get feedback from all the boards and as many stakeholders as possible --hope to hit the right note with our guideline and strike the right balance
- We'll do our best to answer all questions and respond today but we are interested in getting all feedback by end of August \* \*(Deadline for responses to MoE: August 31, 2011 [fundraising@ontario.ca](mailto:fundraising@ontario.ca))
  
- **Jeanette Robinson:** MoE Guideline informs school board policy; provides foundation for each school board to develop or update existing guidelines, policies and procedures while recognizing local flexibility and community concerns across all 72 school boards
- Draft Guideline position? Ministry has outlined that fundraising should be *complementary to* funding for public education, but never replace it; this draft guideline tries to provide best practices and examples of eligible and ineligible uses of fundraising proceeds
- Clarity around issue of capital fundraising – refer back to statement that fundraising must not be used to replace publicly funded education
- MoE provides capital grants to school boards in the form of capital infrastructure funding and facility renewal – some confusion at first around MoE draft guideline position so want to provide clarity – our *existing* guideline position is that if something is already funded in a school board through an existing MoE grant allocation (i.e. ,including gymnasias, auditorias, science labs etc.), then it is *ineligible* under the existing draft policy guidelines
- We'll be looking to provide clearer detail on this issue in the final policy guideline
- Again, we're here to listen and take feedback
  
- **ICAC Co-ordinator:** Thanks extended to Ministry officials. Introduces “ICAC FFS” – Inner City Advisory Committee Fees and Fundraising Sub-committee – this is a working group consisting of ICAC members and community members; meets regularly but all their recommendations come back to ICAC table for consideration first; for example, ICAC FFS

recommended that MoE be asked back to consult on their draft fundraising policy guideline which ICAC approved, as well as extending invitation widely through other TDSB constituencies

- ICAC FFS Co-chairs, Lesley Johnston, Research and Policy Analyst, Social Planning Toronto, and Michael Griesz, teacher: - Presentation – see link –
- <H:\ICAC Student Fees, fundraising etc. issues\yourprezi.pdf>
- Hoping ICAC will adopt the perspective of issues presented
- *Co-chairs go through PowerPoint Presentation slide-by-slide*
- **Final Recommendation (# 5 of 5):** That both the Ministry of Education and the Toronto District School Board *articulate and fund* a vision for education beyond targets or test scores and graduation rates that outline what materials, activities and programs should be available at no extra charge to all students. This should include appropriate learning materials for all courses, including hands-on technology, arts, health and physical education and computer courses, access to extra-curricular activities and participation in arts and sport programs.
- Thanks given to sub-committee, student interns, CAPSI, staff, People for Education for all the data and work in putting together the presentation and to the MoE for attending
- **Kipling Collegiate Presentation** – Principal Roger Dale and staff (Budget secretary, Curriculum Leader for Student Services, and Food and Nutrition/Family Studies Programs Teacher)
- Kipling is ‘Dixon Road’ school, out near airport
- Approximately 775 students, 57 nationalities, majority single parent families living in high rise apartments on the Dixon, very low income; on ‘short end’ of LOI; 75% of kids in this school would be considered ‘at risk’ in one way or another
- Philosophically, whole school agrees 1 million % with equity and kids not being discouraged from taking courses etc. due to not having the money; all kids should have access to all programs, regardless of socio-economic background; anyone arguing against this, it is sort of like arguing against mom and apple pie!
- Two budgets in school:
  - (i) Non –public budget – i.e. monies raised through fundraising
  - (ii) Public budget\*-- monies school board provides to principal to run school – i.e., to purchase texts, referee fees, computers, transportation, paper, postage, etc.; principals also uses this money to provide curriculum leaders with budget for their department’s supplies etc.
- \*Note: does not include teachers’ salaries, administrators’ salaries, heating, electricity etc.)
- **2003-04** – 660 students > budget of \$211,000 = \$320.00 per student > note that when we say education is funded at approximately \$10,000 per pupil per year, it is a different amount to what really comes “into the building”- not quite \$10,000
- **2008-09-** budget was \$223,000 but 741 students = \$ 300.00 per student
- **2010-11** – budget down to about \$275.00 per student; checked Statistics Canada- Consumers Price Index has gone up about 16%, in other words, what you could buy for \$100.00 in 2000, now costs \$116.00 - \$118.00; Lot of people say, ‘well you get a LOI supplement’ and Kipling *does* get a LOI supplement, but it is about \$4300 per year, which does not go far
- **Impact of downloading costs to schools** - i.e., Staff Blackberries (mandatory) - \$3,000, referees’ fees \$2500+ per year (used to be paid centrally), team sports - \$8000 for transportation (TTC/buses etc.) costs, textbooks now funded by schools – costs increasing annually for

textbooks whenever new curricula are introduced; math text 7 years ago – \$60 to \$70 (used to be funded by the Board, now schools must pay for them)... now \$90 to \$100

- **What will happen in our school next year when we can no longer charge lab/student fees?**  
It's great that we can no longer charge these fees, but will mean another \$17,000-\$18,000 out of school/ public budget; question becomes – how are we going to raise that money?? Right now, compared to 2002-2003 budget, I have 32 – 35% less buying power; this policy change will add another decrease in buying power of about 8- 10%, meaning I will have between 40 – 45% less buying power total than seven years ago when I began as principal
- Need to acknowledge costs to policy change – although change is wonderful – problem is we've forgotten -- we need to get from here, past practice, to where we want ideally to go and where it *is fair for all*
- There is a **price tag** attached to that – especially for schools such as ours that has zero ability to fundraise (fundraiser last week and raised \$50)—where will this \$17,000-\$18,000 come from?? What do we do without? Computers? Textbooks? Paper? Photocopying? We are at a loss as to where this extra \$17, 000 will come from
- My fear as someone who has been in education for 38 years is that I can see the thin edge of the wedge of this situation called a “two-tiered educational system”, and I don't think that serves our children
- Thank you for listening, we're obviously caught in a bind
- Staff examples – course level perspective - practical examples from the classroom as opposed to the whole school
- **Co-Op Teacher:** over 100 students in co-op program currently with approximately a \$1500 budget; all co-op students (mandated by the Ministry) *must* be certified in CPR and cost of course is \$30 per student (which is a deal) – adds up to more than co-op budget right there if we have to cover this cost! We'll either have to drop the co-op program or not have any budget at all for student services in order that kids can go out to co-op placements
- **Social Science courses** – currently six “food” courses which provide hands-on learning which kids enjoy; total budget \$1320 – If I don't charge a lab fee (currently charges each student \$15.00 – and I always speak to each student individually to make sure they can afford it and no other students are aware of it), then can't offer labs where food is prepared; one of my main concerns is that if we make lab fee optional then the students who have to opt out are going to become visible through this process; secondly, if you break this down, 120 students > \$1320 approximately \$11.00 per student or, on a per course basis, approximately \$220 per course for food -- try feeding 20 kids on \$220 over five months through lab process; If I only pay for food then I have no money left for textbooks or other resources (i.e., repairing broken appliances); currently looking for donations for the program, for example, all the cutlery in the kitchen has been donated by me; I was a student not long ago and remember what that was like; I hate to think that now I am a teacher that my students come into the classroom worrying about what they'll find in that classroom based on the luck of where they live or where they come from; thank you for listening

#### > **General questions and comments from the floor:**

- *Trustee Cathy Dandy:* I have a long history as parent activist; come at this from years of experience, parent of three, with many, many, many parent friends across the city, and now as a trustee; current daytime job is in Mental Health area so am well aware of system inequities; A couple of comments - fabulous presentations both the formal one and the one from Kipling; likely eye-opening for some attending

- Want to focus on a couple of things, however – attended fundraising discussion with this committee a while ago, raised this issue then and want to raise this particular point again - I completely identify with need to eradicate inequities in the system and, in particular, to prevent kinds of situations that we hear coming out of schools like Kipling where students and families living in low income areas are bearing a burden that they simply cannot bear, but, I also want to speak to the great divide we saw clearly between the high LOI and low LOI but there is also a great massive middle, and I want to speak to that great, massive middle because those are *my* friends; many of my friends would not even come close to the LICO (low income cut-off) but they absolutely cannot afford fees...they cannot afford to cover the costs of these additional costs for this simple delivery of public education ...they go into debt to it, their children cannot attend, they do not go on trips, they do not have band instruments or uniforms, they do not have the luxuries, what have become luxuries in the public education system and, really, to my second point, *none* of them are luxuries. We are at a crossroads today – we already have a two-tiered public education system; I had to stand up as I am *so* angry!
- Fifteen years ago we had a public education system that did *not* do this! There were still inequities in the system but not to the extent there are today; I would argue that the cut-off is, if there is a space in the building, or a space on the field, or a book or an experience that is part of the delivery of public education, then it shall *not* charge a fee and *nobody* will pay for it except the government; that has to be a cut-off because when is it that something is necessary or not necessary? Because if it is necessary, then it is paid for out of the public purse, and I would argue that unless we use that definition there is a large number of parents who are perfectly able of mounting a human rights complaint, because once you get into something like this, where you allow the government to write a guideline that enables policy to be written that firmly establishes a two-tiered system and cuts children and youth off from what is legitimately theirs in the receiving of public education, I think you will find there will be opportunities to take this in a different direction for parents and I for one will be happy to help them do that
- **Parent:** One thing that is important, and I appreciate Cathy's point, because there is an entitlement issue here and I think the Ministry somehow has to internalize that – there isn't enough funding to run the regular classrooms, there isn't any capital of any consequence to fix the buildings, there isn't any capital of any consequence to build new buildings, there isn't any capital of any consequence to even put energy efficient devices on buildings so the school can save money, so the school is *forced* to go out, and will go out - they'll figure out a way – believe me, I know, that schools, parents, staff, students are very entrepreneurial, you can make all the guidelines you want my friends, but the reality is that people only have their child in grade one or grade two once and they'll fight as hard as they can to get the best possible services, and we as a school board have to encourage them to do that because that is the job here; we want to get the best deal for all our kids; so somehow the Ministry has to realize they're lagging in funding-- not \$100 a kid, not \$200 a kid, not \$800 a kid, *but sort of \$ 4000 to \$5000 a kid*, relative to the 'old days' when I was Chair of the Toronto Board of Education – we spent 40 cents on the dollar more per kid than you do now! I am so impressed that Vicky and others get good things out of a school system that is so chronically under-funded. So, please, when you are addressing your guidelines, recognize that people will break them, then, also recognize that the system is so fundamentally under-funded that we need to get above Alabama, somehow, with our funding we have drifted down to 46 out of all the US States -- this is ridiculous!

- Facilitator:**

Dilemma is that we have the Ministry here and we are recording this discussion, but from our previous presentation and some of the things we were doing the impact was, to put it politely, limited, and we are also addressing ICAC, Trustees, Principals, Staff, and, what's the next move? What *can* we do? Trustee Dandy talked about one venue that hasn't been explored, and that's certainly an option for some, but as staff and contributors to the TDSB, what is our role? I think that is a worthy question for this committee as well
- Trustee Cary-Meagher:** I can get very upset about this. One of things we've been looking at for five years now is the gradual increase in the number of children in poverty in this city, and when the David Hulchanski's maps came out, and I go back to the time when Bob was Chair of the Toronto Board of Education, and look at those maps and look the present maps and look at the projections of the maps and know that the poverty in this city is going now place but up, so the number of schools that will even be able to begin to do *any* fundraising becomes larger and larger, and the disparity will become larger and larger, and not only the inner city kids, but the kids locked in pockets of poverty and well-to-do schools are all going to be caught in this same unforgiveable net of underfunding, and I know the people here from the Ministry are not the people who are responsible, you are merely the messengers, and I am sorry our anger is so focussed, but it is legitimate and very heartfelt anger. We are, the Trustees of the Toronto District School Board, elected to care for the children within our system, and if we were *not* angry and were not fighting with you, we would not be doing our job and you should not respect us, so respect us and what we are saying because it is *so* important. This city will become an unliveable city because *we will not be able* to take care of the needs of the burgeoning number of kids who are hungry, who can't see, who can't hear, who can't buy books, who can't take field trips, who can't take courses, and Model Schools for Inner Cities will not be able to cover that, the Toronto District School Board will not be able to cover that, and the fault will lie with a Ministry of Education and a government that doesn't seem to give a damn
- Ken Mayhew** – I am here as a parent of two TDSB students, and also, in a volunteer capacity, Chair Elect of the Association of Fundraising Professionals – a self-regulated group that puts guidelines around ethics and conduct for fundraising in place around the world, actually; I am privileged to have the opportunity to share a bit on a topic outside of equity relative to education fundraising – I am not expert at all, but learning an awful lot in terms of what I've heard over the past two hours and articles read over the last few months, but my comments come from a slightly different perspective in that I am often called upon by media and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for example, to talk about proper fundraising conduct, and that would be to ensure that the Ministry continue to urge this whole issue of accountability and transparency relative to fundraising; we know that misconduct stories that are reported in the media, some of them exaggerated, others absolutely true, lead to growing scepticism and cynicism, and a resistance on the part of the average Canadian to donate to any cause, social justice or otherwise, and so to the extent that the school boards and the ministry in cooperation can ensure that we continue to drive for enhanced accountability that the parent council members, let alone just the parents, can know how the funds were spent within individual schools, it's going to create a healthier context and environment for all, and again, from the from the framework that I come from, I fundamentally believe that fundraising enhances the social fabric; it teaches our children to reach out and help others, that it's not necessarily a bad thing, even though obviously in this context it would be something we would prefer not to have to do, but because we need to do it, let's make sure it's done in an accountable and respectful manner

- I think my second point would just be to echo some of the comments said earlier that there truly are models available relative to the idea of equity funds, and that if the top 20 are inevitably going to remain so significantly higher capacity than the bottom 20, there are mechanisms whereby I do believe school systems and parent councils with enough direction, perhaps not voluntary, making it involuntary, would actually contribute to the schools down the road; the challenge in fundraising overall, is that people, and we know this every day in all things we do, give where they are going to give, so if we tell them that they can't, or that they have to give somewhere else, or we take away the accountability in the system or we introduce scepticism and cynicism in the system, they simply don't give at all, and I would humbly suggest that that's not the effort we want, but instead we want to enhance the mechanisms by which we can all become more effective and accountable and, hopefully, equitable in the process. I'll leave it at that.  
Thank you
- **Angela Pettiti** – Hi. I'm here as a principal representative. The one concern I really have is as we go into next year and schools implement the new funding guidelines, I think what the Board and the Ministry need to understand is that there will be a backlash as parents and students look to having the sorts of things that they've had in other years, but that will no longer be allowed. You heard from Roger Dale how much less there is, and now there will be even less because there are less fees that are going to be charged, and that is going to impact schools in ways that I don't know that people really appreciate, and that is, the number of extra-curricular activities, the number of sports teams that can be funded, the number of competitions that people go into because they all have fees, the number of field trips allowed, all of those things; one of my principals said, "I'm in an art school and my kids are used to doing great big pieces of canvas because that's what we specialize in, and it's going to be very difficult to tell them they are limited to a 5x5 portrait because that's all the school budget will allow; well, there *will be* impacts, I can see you shaking your head, that the TDSB, and the Ministry, and teachers and principals and *parents* need to understand; I think there will be a huge uproar in September that principals will feel, that individual teachers will feel, and that will also impact trustees and the Ministry; this is a huge concern for our organization
- **Nadia Heyd** - I am a parent with three kids in elementary school; I want to first build on something this gentlemen right here said about the creativity of parents willing to do the best for their kids and do whatever they can to get 'things' for them, and one of the things that we all need to be aware of, if we're not already, is that there might be some parent organizations out there that raise funds for schools that wouldn't even be touched by any sort of guideline or policy that comes from Ministry of Education, and that is their private foundations that are set up outside of some schools, so let's keep that in mind as we're building guidelines and consider that as well; they are not so easy to find, but I have found a handful by going to the CRA website and entering school names to see if there is a charity set up with a school name in it, so those are quite separate from school councils funds
- A lot of things I want to say have already been expressed with great emotion by others, but I'll just add a little bit-- parents fundraise because they want the best for their kids, but they want really basic things, at my school we fundraised for a carpet for the floor so that kindergarteners wouldn't have to sit on the tiles when they listen to the teacher read a story; we fundraised for books for the library and shelves to put them on, these are basic but unfunded things that no school should go without; draft fundraising guidelines call for funds raised to complement public funding for education, but I think before we can decide how to use fundraising to complement what is funded, we need an opportunity or a way of expressing what it is we value and what it is

- (i) What is it that we want every student to have access to in every school?
  - (ii) Where there are differences in the level of need between schools, what is the most effective way of allocating resources to meet *every* student's need to be successful at learning?
- *Every single parent knows* that, if you have more than one child, and I have three, that fair does mean equal, and equal does not mean fair; I value fairness, I value equity, over doling out the same amount to every school; let's put resources where they are needed so that all our kids can be successful
- **Zane Schwartz** – I am a Student Trustee with the Toronto District School Board, but I'm also the President of Student Trustees from across Ontario, and this is something that as student representatives we've been working on for awhile. Earlier in the TDSB in November we passed a policy that did *not* address the equity issue, but we hope addressed the issue of bigger accountability and transparency, and it had some things that are really basic that I hope the Ministry will take back, things like sharing a breakdown of what the fee you are actually paying goes to with parents, sharing that in the agenda, sharing it on the website, and actually providing a receipt so parents understand what they're paying for, but that's not what I want to talk about today.
- What I want to talk about today is the three years of research that led up to that policy with me and my predecessors in the TDSB, and what we found that hurts students most is the *incrementalization* of fees. It's the fact that earlier a teacher spoke about the \$15 fee in her class, and what we find is that more and more individual teachers who do not have enough money, and so they ask students to pay. In my school there is a fee when you walk in the door, it's \$50, but then in Math you need \$8, in Science you need \$10, in English you need another \$10... it adds up *so* quickly. What ends up happening is you literally have students paying \$100 or \$200 or \$300. I think what is so important is that there needs to be a clear message from the Ministry as to what *should be* funded, and what *shouldn't be* funded because if, let's say, we want to fund Science class and you have to have goggles to protect your eyes, you *have* to fund those goggles, if you want to fund English class, then you *have* to be able to have the resources available in that class, and if the teacher needs to photocopy that, then you have to provide enough money for the teacher to do that photocopying, and it's something that even when it's spelled out explicitly... I mean English class is my favourite example because it is mandatory every year from Junior Kindergarten right to Grade 12 and yet there continues to be places in the TDSB and across Ontario where students are asked to pay money for it, and you see that in math class and you see it in science class... this is all available in the People for Education's report that came out a few months ago.
- I think from the Ministry's perspective one of the worst feelings in the world... I mean I am lucky enough never to have experienced it, but so many students have expressed it to me, when a teacher says, "oh, by the way, bring in \$10 tomorrow", and you know you don't have it, and you know your parents don't have it, and although it's great to hear about teachers like the one from Kipling who spoke earlier about the anonymous ways of expressing that you can't pay for it, but that it isn't always 'out there', and it is likely one of the most *humiliating* stories I've ever heard, when a student has to say, "sorry Miss, I don't have the \$10 and so I can't come to class", or, my favourite example, is the first day when you have to pay the fee, there are some schools, if you can't pay, you have to go, in front of everyone, and they are all standing in the gym, to the guidance counsellor or the vice principal and explain *why* you can't pay, and everyone knows

- *Question from the floor* – “...and you can’t get your calendar, right?”
- ...and you don’t get your timetable and you can’t walk into class, so that is actually denying students their education, based on that ... so I just wanted to share a bit of that and Varun is now going to share some more research that we’ve done in the past few years
- **Varun Desai** – Hi, my name is Varun Desai and I am a member of TDSB Student Super Council and I work with Zane. So, what we do is we go to quadrant meetings where students can come out and share their input and any of the concerns that they have, so this year I was the quadrant’s secretary, so I would attend these meetings and hear different input from students, and a lot of these were capital issues, like our drinking fountains don’t work, that we have graffiti, graffiti was a huge problem in the TDSB this year; people talked about how they don’t have good textbooks, that inventory needs to be replaced, people talked about how they have a roof that’s fallen in, right? There are leakages that are happening to rooves....and now we hear the idea about capital, that the Ministry of Education says we can use fundraising to improve capital, but what I’ve realized is that the schools that were consistently suffering these problems were the ones highest on the LOI, so that if we incorporate this idea and continue to go along with it, then all we will do is increase the disparity of the two-tiered system that we already have, that schools such as the ones in Jane and Finch for example, are not going to get those resources that *they so truly need*, but schools like Forest Hill or Rosedale, schools already so low on the LOI and have sufficient funds, are only going to get more and more money, *so, what fairness is that?*
- As well, it also limits students from themselves, from exploring what they want to do, like a lot of students that I met, they want to create, they want to have technology and innovation, they wanted to build an automotive car, but there just aren’t enough funds in the school system. I have met so many students through Super Council this year, and what I found is that these students are ready for the future, these students are *so* bright, *so* technologically advanced, just brilliant in every way, however, what I’m seeing is we don’t have the funding, we don’t have the support we’d like to provide them, it’s just not happening, so in a way, it’s actually marginalizing what they would be able to do
- Another thing I wanted to bring up was, when I talk to students, especially my friends or my colleagues who are well off, they didn’t know about this problem, and that might be the issue that the Ministry of Education faces too, that they don’t see enough awareness about this problem, but the fact is, students do not want to be the ones who go out and speak up about this, they don’t want to be the ones to admit that they don’t have sufficient funds, that they don’t have enough money to fund the things they want to do in school, so therefore sometimes it may not seem to be an issue, but when I educate my colleagues about this, when I show them the statistics that are in our presentation, they realize it really is an issue, so I strongly encourage the Ministry of Education to please abolish *any* school fees and to provide sufficient funding for us because we are the future generation and right now I think we need these funds in order to become that future generation that you aspire us to be

**Facilitator** –

We are going to limit everyone to one minute now, as we need to look at next steps and the Ministry also wants to respond.

- **Diane Dyson** – parent Well, I’ve got stories of ‘lived experience’, but I’ll pick one, besides the fact that my regular grouch is that one of my kids goes to a poor school and the other one goes to a rich school and the cookies cost different at the bake sale, so one amount of work raises them

- **VP Maplewood-** I come from a few different angles. I am a Vice Principal at Maple Woods, it's a special needs school, and... fundraising? Very challenging, it basically doesn't happen. There are too many challenges with the kids and with the parents as well, so it does not happen, and it's very difficult. Popcorn sales maybe raise a couple of dollars. And, as well, from a different angle, People for Education. I was involved in that fifteen years ago, and again, this is why we're here, because of what happened fifteen years ago, and to add to that, one of my kids goes to North Toronto and that's very strange because the fundraising there is through the roof and very different from the school I work at. So, I encourage the Ministry to consider abolishing fundraising for many reasons
- **Miriam Tersias – parent** Hello, my name is Miriam Tersias and my kids go to Carlton Street Public School, my two little ones and I have one in high school as well, and I just wanted to say 'thank you' for the Model Schools initiative. All my kids needed glasses, so this is something wonderful, as a single parent I couldn't provide glasses for my two little ones, so I would like to thank that, and I would also like to talk about the fees and also the trips, there's fundraising, and for a single parent this is very tough. At the beginning of the school year, like this young man here said, the first thing you gotta do is bring the \$40, or the \$50 at different schools, and sometimes for parents who have two or three kids, bringing like \$80, \$100 or even more, is very hard. You know, we want for our kids to get a good education and to also have the same success that everybody else needs to have, and here we are putting limits to education as soon as they enter the school, their parents are faced with this. *How do we do it? Sometimes we borrow the money to pay for these fees.* We don't want our kids to feel inadequate or looked down upon, even by their peers, so we give the money for the trips, we give the money for the fundraising, if they want to buy books, because you know, this will also mean books for the school library so they can have more resources at their school, so we do all this because we care for our children and we care for the school system, but you know the government funding is very poor so we need to prioritize on that. We need to have *more* money coming into the schools, and I think that we should make it that there are no fees at the school, and that there is more funding also for trips. Some parents didn't even send their kids on the trip that was on Monday at Gulf Stream because they didn't have the money for the trip. So some kids stay away from the trips, which are so wonderful, kids learn so much, and all this is learning; we are making students choose between learning because there is no income, there is no money that can go for these extra-curricular activities sometimes, and so I just like to thank everybody here, but say we need more funding for education – that should be a priority

- **Facilitator** – I just want to say thank you so much to everyone for coming out today and sharing their stories, we really appreciate that, and we just have one more comment and then we'll turn it over to the Ministry, but please don't leave as we do need to take next steps on this issue
- **Trustee Howard Kaplan** – Very quickly, Howard Kaplan, Trustee in York Centre. I am a new Trustee starting December 1<sup>st</sup>, and during the first two months I was shown all my schools, the various superintendents took me around to visit the schools. On one day I visited two schools in a row – we'll call them school "c" and school "s". When I visited school "c" it was presented to me as a "model" school, so it receives extra funding for this, that and the other. They were proud to show me the three interactive white boards, 'smart' boards as they happen to be, in this elementary school, I think it is K to 5 or K to 6, with about 300, 350, kids. The *very next* school, school "s", about the same size, the same grade levels, and they were proud to show me interactive white boards in *every single classroom*, including the kindergarten classes. How did they get these smart boards? Through fundraising over the previous five years, it was the parents and the community that raised the money to buy *what every student should have from public funding, not through fundraising*. But this *really* shocked me, to no extent, about the *inequity in how our schools are funded*. I could go on, but it's running late
- **Parent and ICAC Co-ordinator, Cassie Bell** – I am going to wear two hats, the first is my co-ordinator hat, and I'd like to thank everyone, including the Ministry representatives, for coming out today. I really encourage you to take back what you've heard – you've heard from parents, you've heard from staff, you've heard from ICAC members, you've heard from principals and students; to me, it is unequivocal, the message... and you've heard from trustees as well. This is my other 'hat' now --I'm going to tell you, as a parent, I have four children who went through the public system. I would say I am middle class, although I'm one of that vanishing breed that Dr. Hulchanski talked about, and I did a scan, this was two years ago, so I had two in high school and two in elementary, over the first two months I paid out \$500, between music fees, between uniforms, between getting that timetable, supposedly for fundraising, between sports fees – that was not hockey, that was not football, you want to play that, you're talking another 'league' --at what point do we say 'enough'? The letter I wrote the other day was to the City of Toronto, urging my councillor--so it's not just you guys! – urging my councillor and saying, "public money is for public good", and that's where I'm going to leave it
- **Aim Mujib – ICAC Co-chair and parent** – I came to this country in 2005, this is one of the happiest countries, Canada has become second happiest country in the world, I don't know if you know that, but since I'm here, I think it is a great choice that I came to Canada. But, day by day I'm going to this fundraising, day by day I am bringing kids to collect money for different issues. I'm also one of the Co-chairs for the George Webster Elementary School, I am also Co-chair of the ICAC -- thank you for electing me – but, I'm very angry you know, I'm very, very angry, to see today, people begging for money from the Ministry, where, if they need to raise their salary, they do not think about the food, there is no food, and a lot of parents that are single parents. I have issue if kids ask for second piece of bread at the school lunchtime and there was no extra left. The day before yesterday, I was at Wal-Mart and I saw two kids begging for two dollars for selling candy, exactly like my son four or five years ago, and that's really unacceptable. I have nothing else to say except *think about it and re-think* about it, make it work! Please, this is our future, these are our kids, do not let them go away. So, please, thank you again, thank you for making the time, but please think about it

- **Facilitator** – Just before we hand it over to the Ministry, if I could just get a straw vote? I'm wondering if people want to be kept on the list, we got your emails today, if you'd like to be kept on this list, to be kept in the loop because, as we were told, there is still another step that's coming which is around corporate partnerships and so we'll probably have a third round of these in the fall, so if I could just get you to raise your hand if you are still interested in being kept on the list about these issues .... Great, thank you, and we'll turn it over to the Ministry now – thank you for coming
  
- **Ministry of Education representative – Andrew Davis, Director of the Finance Division, Ministry of Education** –Well, I wanted to start off by saying that a few people apologized for their feelings, and there is no apology necessary. It was actually great. It's great to see how passionate everyone is, and it's great for us to have the opportunity to actually be here and see exactly how this is affecting everyone. So, don't apologize and, actually, we're really appreciative that you actually invited us here and gave us the opportunity in order to hear and speak up
  - A few things I did want to respond to, one is in regards to the goal of the guidelines. So, there were some comments made about the fact that some of these guidelines were actually opening up some of the issues and broadening some of the issues, and that is actually the exact opposite reason of what we're trying to do. We're actually trying to do three different guidelines: the fees, the fundraising, and then the corporate partnerships to actually address issues like equity and inclusiveness, so that was one the main reasons why we started out on this path, was because there was such disparity in practices across the province and disparity in within school boards, so if what is in the guideline is not helping, then either we have to do a better job at communicating, or we have to do a better job in crafting what we're trying to write, because that's definitely not the intent
  - The next thing I wanted to practices touch on is certainly one of the areas where a concern was raised that the guideline.... (MP3 recording indecipherable at this point)... in regards to capital..... and this is maybe where we should be more clear... there *shouldn't* be fundraising for capital, there shouldn't be fundraising for something that increases the square footprint of a school, there should not be fundraising for a gym, so...and that Ministry has approval processes for you to come in for anything in regards to capital that increases your footprint, and we looked to see where the funding source is coming from for those, which should be from your proceeds of disposition, which is certainly something Toronto Public District School Board is quite active in; the other should be funding from the Ministry and we do believe there is certainly funding there for capital, the Ministry just announced \$600 million for new capital construction, and, certainly, Toronto Public certainly has a lot of assets for which a rationalization process is I think, already under way with the TLC I believe it is called
  - Funding – I heard a lot about funding, and I am not going to say this in order to demean any of the comments that have been made, but in regards to provincial funding, we have, the government has, actually increased funding since 02/03 by \$6.6 *billion*, that is a 46% increase. In light of declining enrolment, which has been significant in some areas, and certainly has impacted the Toronto District School Board, that funding is actually a 56% increase. If we look at the Toronto Public District School Board, they're almost on line with that provincial increase in light of declining enrolment. And, again, I don't want that to be demeaning because there's always going to be an issue of whether or not there's enough funding and whether the funding being provided is making its way for its intended purpose and intended uses. You know the province does have a \$20 billion

- I don't want to end on the funding note; I want to end on a note about the issue of 'voluntary'. This was one of the things that I think we have actually tried to do to prevent issues like the denying of access to the class, denying access to the timetable; you know that was one of the things that was in the fees guideline that, again, we said we wanted to talk about inclusiveness and equity, and so that was one of the things we tackled there, and hopefully are going to be successful and we will see come September when the guideline is in place. So, again I want to thank everyone for your feedback, this has been great. I do think the next one is also going to be interesting to this group in regards to corporate partnerships, and you know, I hope you will invite us back and I look forward to hearing your views and inputs and, again, be please assured that we have heard your views here and we'll take those back along with our consultations that we're doing across the rest of the province. Thanks

## Discussion

- **Trustee Chris Glover –**

I just want to respond to the funding issue. It frustrates me because I keep doing that: “no, enrolment is going down and funding is going up, so why are we having all these problems? It must be something with the school board”, well actually if you look from 1998 to today and you look at core funding for just the services that were delivered in 1998, we're down *\$400 per student per year*, so this is why we don't have the money to pay, this is why school budgets get cut, this is why we're constantly making round after round of cuts. At the same time our capital costs keep going up because our buildings are old and the need for repairs is growing and growing and there is no money to pay for those capital repairs, so when the Ministry says funding is going up and enrolment is going down, it's not accurate ... overall, you can say that's true, *but*, when you look at the financial pressures that are on the school board and the reasons that our students are doing with less and less and why there is growing inequity in our system, it's because the core funding is going down, and it continues to go down. Even the full day kindergarten, which is a great program, but, the funding for the full day kindergarten implementation this year was a \$1 million less than what it's actually costing the board, so we're having to make \$1 million in cuts from somewhere else in order to implement the full day kindergarten. So these things, we're constantly... these things like class cap and so on, they're all good ideas, *but* if they are not fully funded, then we're having to cut from other places in order to implement those programs

- **Trustee Sheila Cary-Meagher –**

And you know, when the government decides what we need and we don't, as a school board, happen to need it, and you require us to implement it, that gift isn't a gift, it's a burden. So, you say you're going to have to do this kind of programming, but we need *this* kind of programming, and then with this gift you give us, you also underfund it by, say, \$1 million. The idea that the entire province of Ontario has exactly the same needs in every school board, well it's beyond naïve, it's into... almost malicious. We work *really* hard trying to meet the needs of our students and we have a master who doesn't believe us, and that's very difficult because we're really, really working at this. I work 60 hours a week trying to make myself a better trustee and to do the proper things for the kids in our system, and when you give us a grant that misses the mark on something that we *desperately need* and we can't convince you to either expand the grant or

allow us to interpret it in a way that is beneficial to our students, without losing the intent, so that the spirit is dead on, although it may not be completely on the words that you want ...but if you're going to target things, then *at least give* us some flexibility so that it actually goes where we know it needs to go, and I don't know how you do that because I think our staff fight really hard with your bosses to create flexibility and, I think, if we get one more of these kinds of gifts, you're just going to kill us. It just isn't working the way it is... and I know it's not you guys, and I am talking through you to somebody else, but I wish you could hear our plea. We can't fee our kids and they *need* to be fed. We have to go to a corporate arrangement to provide vision and hearing that should be the provincial government's cost, and we're forced to do it in a way that drives kids into *shopping malls* to get glasses and lenses because our government doesn't provide that money, same with the hearing situation, and we have *no way* of reaching those kids. In fact, we're probably doing something a teeny weeny bit illegal in providing food from education money, and vision and hearing screening from education money, but do we *not* do it? Or do we do it and be naughty? I don't expect you to answer that, it isn't exactly rhetorical, but it is a bit...

**Trustee Howard Kaplan –**

Thank you, Sheila. Just one sentence, the provincial government is giving away, I forget how much, how big it is, but their plan is, and they've already started this, tax cuts to corporations, which is of course contributing to the provincial deficit. Is our education being sacrificed, the education of our kids, being sacrificed for corporate giveaways? And I can say this, to make this sound political because I am a politician...now I am not asking you guys because you guys are staff, but pass this on to the Ministry

**ICAC Community Co-chair and parent, Aim Mujib –**

And I have one last thing to say. I can see lots of heads going up and down when we speak about funding ...but where is this money going? We have millions of dollars shortage. Is this going to someone else's pocket? How come the kids are still on the street asking for money? How come these kids are not being fed at the schools? How come we have to get donations to buy books? Where are these millions of dollars going? I do not have direct questions to you sir, but I thank you for the words, but, is there any way we can get an answer where this money is going acutally? Or, actually, is this money coming to the TDSB or not? Chris, and a lot of people who have already left, they did a lot of research before they're coming up with the deficiency of this money, so I don't know where this money is going if you guys are paying it to us, but it is definitely not coming to us...thank you

**Facilitator –**

Thank you everyone for your comments today...so Michael and I made a presentation on behalf of the Fees and Fundraising Sub-committee, but we have a couple of requests that we'd like to put forward to you...I know we want to wrap this up quickly, we really appreciate you staying longer already, first of all, as the Fees and Fundraising Sub-committee, we would like to request that Cassie forward a copy of the minutes of today's meeting to the representatives from the Ministry of Education; second of all, we are hoping that ICAC will approve a motion to forward our recommendations that you saw at the end of our presentation, you all have a copy in front of you today, immediately to the whole board, we are in budget deliberations right now, including all advisory committees, Super Council, senior staff etc. I am putting those two motions forward and I am looking for a seconder? Thank you, Nathan. Is there discussion on the issue? In that case, I'll call a vote. All in favour? That is motion carried. Thank you so much again everyone

for being here today and sharing your stories with us, really appreciate that, and I'll hand it over to Aim to wrap it up.

**Meeting Adjourned**