

ICAC Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2011
6:30 – 9:30 pm

In attendance:

Darlene Berry, Varun Desai, Nathan Gilbert, Lesley Johnston, Howard Kaplan, Darcy MacCallum, Chris Glover, George Martell, Jayne Delbeek Eksteins, Huma Aumar, Sharlene Bourjot, Don Diplo, Anne Sheppard, Sheila Cary-Meagher

Regrets:

Manon Gardner, Jann Houston, Monika Etzler, Janice Gillespie, Peter Mallouh, Chris Penrose, Simon Storey, Angela Pettiti, Chris Tonks

Staff:

Vicky Branco, Craig Snider, Vidya Rego, Cassie Bell

Guests:

Mohamed Maie, Malini Singh, Catherine Sople, Dilys Leman, Caitlin French, Saida Sabrie

1. Approval/amendment of agenda: N. Gilbert, D. MacCallum, approved unanimously

2. Co-chairs' Message – via MSIC Steering Committee

Meeting process points to keep meetings running smoothly:

- Under “business arising”, only short items (5 minutes or less) should be added to ICAC meeting agendas (given ICAC meetings are lengthy)
- If item requires more than 5 minutes, please add to next month’s agenda for discussion
- In fairness, please make sure all discussion avoids use of specific staff names and has an engaging, respectful and convivial tone ☺
- Please, no acronyms!

3. Previous ICAC Meeting Minutes (April 5, 2011)

- Moved by G. Martell, seconded by N. Gilbert, approved unanimously

4. Updates from ICAC members

- SWIS update – agencies just now seeing budgets
- Another month or so before information regarding impact of CIC (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) cuts becomes clear
- Trustee Kaplan confirms that motion went to Board regarding these cuts, but was approved through “consent agenda” so no opportunity to speak to motion publicly

5. TDSB Strategic Directions Plan (DRAFT) – Discussion for feedback to Board of Trustees (please see attached for final feedback submitted by ICAC)

- Does this relate to the Director’s Vision of Hope?
- In a sense- Vision of Hope is expanded version
- Is this ‘strategic plan’ for one year or several?
- Intended for one year then will be re-evaluated
- What does “build up” strategy mean? (Section 2 of document)
- What is this document for? No “vision” in it! Too technocratic
- What does “eradication of effects of marginalization” mean?

- Wording provides a foothold to work with in broadest sense; 22 individual trustees and various staff created this plan coming out of retreat, followed by tele-conferences on ‘action items’; it is not perfect, but a start
- *Recommendation:* Please include a vision of what this strategy is directed towards
- Outline problems strategic directions are directed towards – name it! i.e., classism, racism, sexism etc.
- Concern re: statement, “align funding with Ministry of Education priorities”
- *Recommendation:* TDSB ‘partners’ are not mentioned in this document – this could be a serious oversight; for example SWIS is not mentioned which means a gap where good collaboration is in fact happening; important to acknowledge partners’ contributions
- Name areas of marginalization that we want to eradicate – i.e., poverty, racism etc.
- Language of equity is missing – equitable outcomes is key
- “Eradication of marginalization” will require resources – recommend using money from appropriate grant streams appropriately!
- Plan does not appear directly focused on students; would like to see highlighted more student involvement in decision-making, i.e., “student voice”; provide skills and opportunities for all students to feel part of their school community
- Not sufficient to import an external framework that does not reflect TDSB’s culture, community partnerships, strengths and challenges
- Need a locally developed TDSB framework in place as foundation, i.e., internal organizational framework is key
- Suggest making a sixth section for key additions: i.e.
 - (i) Develop school community hubs
 - (ii) Develop practical solutions in the five key areas of equity concerns: social class, race, sexuality, gender, disability
 - (iii) Develop a social justice curriculum for all students
 - (iv) Develop strong student leadership throughout the system – engaging students in decision-making at all levels of the system, enabling and releasing them and their strengths
- Important to recognize necessity of a myriad of supports (including lower class size) where needs are high, i.e., ELL, Special Needs learners, students’ mental health issues etc.
- Timelines for this type of consultation are too short – need to allow 3 to 4 months turnaround for advisory committee and parent consultations on important issues such as this

ACTION ITEM

ICAC Co-ordinator will collate all input from ICAC meeting and any additional input by Sunday May 8th @ 9pm, then circulate to ICAC for final perusal before forwarding as formal submission to Chair Bolton’s office by Monday May 9th, 9am deadline.” Next steps” will be communicated as soon as available.

6. ICAC Co-ordinator’s Report – Please see attached

Additional items:

- Big “*thank you*” to ICAC’s Chris Penrose for volunteering at the ICAC information table at the recent FUTURES Conference. Chris stayed all day and was a very positive advocate for ICAC. His time and enthusiasm were very much appreciated.
- Re: Board’s ‘consultation on consultation’ -ICAC Co-ordinator suggested linking consultation process to “CPACs” – Cluster Parent Academy Committees; currently a conscientious effort being made in inner city schools through CPACs to do outreach and gather feedback, but timelines for consultation need to be long enough for this process to work
- Co-constructing information (i.e., re: policy etc.) is important democratic tool

7. Staff Report –

- Central Co-ordinating Principal Vicky Branco gave PowerPoint presentation with highlights from TDSB’s FUTURES Conference (May 2-4, 2011); speakers included Ian Manion (Keynote on Mental Health issues), Stephen Lewis, Barbara Coloroso and many more
- Conference overall was huge success with 800 attendees first full day and 1500 on last
- Students participated as “Social Justice Activators”
- On May 4th, approximately 400 MSIC parents attended conference and participated in a MSIC “Carousel of Sharing” in the afternoon which was outstanding; carousel showcased resources for parents to collect to share with other parents in their CPACs;
- Afternoon events included parent speakers who were inspirational, and a chance for parents to network with and community agencies, program reps and TDSB Advisory Committee reps, also opportunity to examine Cluster Events posters put together by Community Support Workers
- Two CPAC reps (Cluster Parent Academy Committee) from Cluster E7 also spoke passionately about power of MSIC Parent Academies – encouraged parents present to get involved; E7 CPAC organized first ever Parent Academy conference which was huge success – 140 parents attended and 150 kids!
- Next year’s FUTURES Conference will be focused on “Equity in Education”
- 2011-12 MSIC will likely include highest 125 elementary schools (not including four highly specialized medical and special needs schools); briefing note sent to Board by Staff indicating change

ACTION ITEM:

CCP to forward MSIC 2011-2012 organizational chart as soon as schools involved have been notified (early June) to ICAC Co-ordinator for circulation to ICAC.

Q: Does current funding include staffing costs?

A: Yes, but \$8.5 million is now worth less / buys less than in 2006 (cost of living has gone up) and staffing costs have increased; therefore MSIC is trying to do more with less

- ICAC motion requesting \$425,000 more in funding will be used to offset food costs/hunger issues, funding ‘top up’ for Hearing and Vision Screening Clinics, mitigate rising transportation costs (food and other supplies), and CPAC (Parent Academy) costs etc.
- Suggest creating a chart which quickly and clearly explains impact and needs versus public funding and philanthropy, i.e., this program sends approximately \$20 – 30,000 per year to the Ministry of Health for uncovered OHIP hearing/vision screening for our students

8. ICAC FFS (Fees and Fundraising Sub-committee) & ICAC AGWG (Achievement Gap Work Group) Updates

I ICAC FF Sub-committee circulated copy of “action items” they are working on:

- (i) Request for ICAC to vet and approve letter to Minister of Education on behalf of ICAC
 - Move to endorse letter with amendment to first line of 4th paragraph from “Premier McGuinty and the Liberal government have remained steadfast in their defence of public education ...” to, “Premier McGuinty and the Liberal government are on record as defending public education...”; amendment moved by N. Gilbert, seconded by V. Desai, approved unanimously.
- (ii) Request that ICAC extend invitation to Ministry of Education representatives to attend part of June ICAC meeting to gather feedback on their draft policy guidelines on fundraising

ACTION ITEM:

ICAC Co-ordinator to invite Ministry of Education officials to upcoming ICAC.

- Suggest invite members of other advisory committees, students etc. also as in December 2010
- Possibly send out media release? (ICAC FFS sub-committee's role)
- Sub-committee will also prepare brief presentation on fundraising issues, including recommendations to bring forward
- Re: Laskin motion from February 9, 2011 Board, request confirmation of fees gathered from highest 150 LOI elementary schools, and highest 30 secondary, plus figures for lowest 150 and lowest 30 secondary on the LOI as comparison

ACTION ITEM:

Staff to request confirmation of fees gathered from highest 150 LOI elementary schools, as well as amount for highest 30 LOI secondary schools, plus amount for lowest 150 elementary and lowest 30 secondary as a comparison.

- ICAC FFS also circulated draft "briefing note" they had prepared (see attached) highlighted history of fees and fundraising and disparities between richer and poorer schools
- Currently no breakdown between fees and fundraising on budget lines, but new policy guidelines will change that as of September 2012 – new way of reporting these items
- Briefing note raises questions – is the LOI (Learning Opportunities Index) impacting the LOG (Learning Opportunities Grant) directly? What is the LOG and its role (if any) in the LOI?
- ICAC FFS will continue to work on this briefing note in view of using it as foundation document for meeting with Ministry of Education on June 7th
- Next ICAC FFS Meeting: May 12th @ 5pm at Social Planning Council of Toronto offices – see ICAC website (under "sub-committees and work groups) for further information: www.tdsb.on.ca/icac

II ICAC AGWG (Achievement Gap Work Group) Update

- Interesting discussions had at meetings – potential is great
- Staff have responded to some of group's suggestions, i.e., changed name of report from "Achievement Gap" to "Opportunity Gap" and stated that report is indeed 'interim'
- ICAC group now waiting to see next iteration of this document
- ICAC member Jeff Kugler has written an article, "Anti-racism in Education: Missing in Action" which G. Martell will circulate to ICAC, along with article on Africentric education
- Next ICAC AGWG meeting postponed (not May 16th) – will confirm date asap (check ICAC website)
- Will be inviting Superintendent Spyropoulos to this meeting

9. Business Arising

- Toronto Public Health (TPH) requests time for a short presentation at the next ICAC meeting- "Reunification and Adaptation Program that TPH has been leading (through CIC funding)" given interesting intersections with ICAC's work – approved.

Meeting Adjourned