

ICAC Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2012

6:30 – 9:30 pm

In attendance –

Nathan Gilbert, Sharlene Bourjot, Janice Gillespie, Darcy MacCallum, Aim Mujib, Sheila Cary-Meagher (Trustee), Howard Kaplan (Trustee), Christopher Penrose, Alejandra Bravo, Heather Johnson, Jann Houston

Regrets –

Chris Glover (Trustee), Anne Sheppard, Michael Griesz, Lesley Johnston, Cheryl Skovronek, George Martell, Huma Umar, David Clandfield, Bob Spencer
(Note: Alejandra Bravo's "regrets" added for December 14th, 2011 meeting)

Staff – Manon Gardner, Donna Quan, Penny Mustin, Vicky Branco, Carl Riley, Lise Medd, Marjolein Winterink, Vidya Shah, Cassie Bell

Guests –

Victoria Haist (Student Intern, Laidlaw Foundation), Saida Sabrie

1. Agenda – Agenda restructured – items #5, 6 moved up before item # 4; moved by D. MacCallum, seconded by N. Gilbert, approved unanimously.

2. Previous Meeting Minutes (December 14, 2011) – moved by N. Gilbert, seconded by H. Kaplan, approved unanimously.

3. ICAC Member Announcements –

- Somali Parents are hosting “Somali Evening” in honour of Black History Month (February); details to be confirmed and flyer circulated; Saida Sabrie will forward to ICAC Co-ordinator for circulation
- Success Beyond Limits (SBL) program applied to present at Futures Conference – workshop will be youth led and will present “equity in practice from youth perspective” Saturday May 5th, 2012 (Futures Conference – www.tdsb.on.ca and click on “Futures”)

5. All Day Learning (ADL) Program Update – Deputy Director Penny Mustin

- Please see attached Power Point presentation by DD Mustin
- Pascal Report on All Day Learning and government implementation of report seem to be parallel universes
- Link to the Pascal Report:
http://www.ontario.ca/en/initiatives/early_learning/ONT06_018865
- Pascal envisioned a seamless full day Kindergarten program for all 4/5 year olds, including pre and post school day care
- Government moved forward with staggered implementation (i.e., TDSB is in Year Two of a five year phase-in) and downloading pre/post care to school boards; Ministry of Education mandated that program would be on a “cost recovery” basis and delivered by school boards, i.e. parent would pay or childcare subsidy would cover cost

- Problem? With **19,000** + children on subsidy wait list currently, even if we had 19,000 spaces we'd still lack money for subsidies
- Currently the TDSB program is not seamless nor at null cost to parents (Board must charge for pre/post care as it is not included in government funding for ADL program)
- Following article outlines various programs across the province and the different forms of implementation used: <http://www.thestar.com/news/article/1082112--singing-the-praises-of-a-seamless-day>
- How are schools chosen for ADL programs? TDSB has decided to look at:
 - space available across system using both position geographically and the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI) as lenses
 - Schools which currently have no childcare in them
- In Phase I of ADL, seven schools selected, three had childcares
- Phase II – none of the schools had childcares
- Phase III (September 2012) 77 will have childcares
- TDSB Programs include one Kindergarten teacher and one ECE all day with 26 children on average (previous MoE cap of 20 children per class was lifted)
- Each full-day Kindergarten have lunchroom supervisors assigned to them – there is a huge gap in funding here as lunchroom supervision is not covered in funding formula
- Integration of curriculum: Teaching and Learning Department focusing on inquiry-based learning and have put much effort into addressing change in curriculum for ½ Kindergarten programs as well
- Concerns first raised don't seem to have been founded– i.e., kids being tired and needing naps? Kids don't want them; Adaptation of space? (i.e., need to use kindergarten or “good” room only)? Minimal issues and disruptions so far; parents who felt they would prefer ½ day to full day program? By October kids were loving full day and parents wanted them to remain
- Significant research is being done on program, but anecdotally teachers say they see kids in program meeting learning benchmarks much, much earlier
- Survey is done at beginning of every year: “Do you require pre/post childcare?” If 20 or more parents request it then schools create them; so far demand has been very little
- Parent goes over ADL package, surveys “list” of needs, i.e., care for March Break, PD days etc.; TDSB have worked hard to accommodate and support small numbers of parents who need coverage for these times
- Optional Attendance issue – families are not moving in order to access schools with ADL programs as predicted, but seem happy to wait for it to arrive locally
- Who will run these pre/post school (sometimes called “shoulder”) programs? Ideally, exciting childcare programs (run in Kindergarten classroom – shared space poses issues however)
- Childcare will continue to provide care in our schools – TDSB has made a statement that they will not ask PFLCs (Parenting and Family Literacy Centres) or existing childcare services to leave schools
- Problem? Some schools will need renovations in order to accommodate ADL program and this requires capital dollars TDSB *does not* have

- Board asked Staff to form work group (including ETT, CUPE, Trustees, Staff etc.) which reports out to Finance Committee (AFA) in early February > http://www.tdsb.on.ca/boardroom/bd_agenda/uploads/Feb_1_2012/Administration_Finance_and_Accountability_Committee/120201_FDK_1898.pdf
- Recommendations from this work group included:
 - Parkdale Junior & Senior Public School's FDK *Before and After School Program* should be fully implemented as a board-operated pilot;
 - In school child care centres should be offered the opportunity to provide the FDK *Before and After School Program*;
 - Child care centres should not be asked to leave a school to make space for FDK;
 - TDSB ensure that there is an FDK *Before and After School Program* where there is sufficient interest.
 - The Work Group had no shared conclusion on board-operated/third-party operated FDK *Before and After School Programs*. The Work Group will be reviewing any impacts of FDK *Before and After School Program* models following the receipt of the parent surveys
- With more funding, the board could make the program more seamless; at this point it is a cost-recovery model only
- Cost of pre/post care is approximately \$28 - \$30 per day per child
- Currently, more informal agreements happening, for example, high school students are covering pre/post school times

Discussion

Q: What is the cost of FDK?

A: The school portion (i.e., 9 am to 3 pm daily) is free to parents; the pre/post school care is also free *IF* the parent has a childcare subsidy

If the parent doesn't have a subsidy then the care is provided on "cost recovery" basis (\$28 - \$30 per day per child) where there is enough parental demand (average of 20 children per program)

- If you go to Waterloo District School Board website (<http://www.wcdsb.ca/schools/Register%20for%20School/Elementary%20Registration/kinder/extended.html>) -- model is different because they have no wait list for subsidies whereas in Toronto we have an almost 20,000 child waitlist! We need to find a way to pay for these subsidies...

Q: Is the wait list growing?

A: Yes, depending on where you live you may *never* get a subsidy; space isn't even an issue – subsidy 'dollars' are tied to the child/parent and the problem is there aren't enough dollars in subsidies to match need

Q: Paid \$1500 (per month) for wrap-around care for son till he reached Grade one; Can confirm that means test is tough!

Q: (i) Could the umbrella agreement between the Board and the City be clarified? How could this impact FDK?

(ii) Also, importance of advocacy on this issue – childcare is fragile now (more than 100 childcares on the brink of closures now) and middle class families are begin squeezed and likely unable to bear further costs

(iii) Release of Phase III of the The Early Years Report reflects crucial role of early years education for our aboriginal children – has the TDSB addressed this?

A: (i) Have not heard anything regarding the TDSB’s/city’s umbrella agreement re: childcare space in schools

(iii) Everyone will have Full Day Kindergarten in Year III so all aboriginal children will be included; Superintendents GenLing Chang and Jim Spyropoulos have ensure that FDK is in line with aboriginal strategy included in the Opportunity Gap Report; confirmed there is also a research component; programming is much more holistic now

Q: In this last year of implementation (Phase III), everything will come crashing down in some wards which haven’t yet had any FDK; (i.e., Trustee Sheila Cary-Meagher and Ward 16); Bruce Public School model (“First Duty” <http://www.toronto.ca/firstduty/>) seems to work – would it work city wide? Balanced day idea? Can we try that?

A: We will be doing some piloting of this concept, i.e., Parkdale Jr. and Sr Public School has the only school/TDSB childcare in the system – pilot to start at this site next year

Q: “Headstart” program through the Aboriginal Friendship Centres – these stop at JK – are these being made “seamless”?

A: Yes.

Q: Next steps?

A: FDK Work group reporting out to Board soon

ACTION ITEM:

ICAC Co-ordinator to track report from work group and forward to ICAC and to request copy of DD Mustin’s PowerPoint to circulate as well.

6. MSIC Resource Team Update (see pdf of newsletter attached)

- Latest version of the MSIC Newsletter (Term 1 Update) presented to committee
- Articles written by a variety of MSIC Staff members – superintendents, Lead Teachers etc.
- *Page 2* – SmartSaver program a huge success – helped many families not only register and obtain RESP grant money for their children’s post secondary education, but also helped them navigate obtaining key government documents (Social Insurance Numbers or “SIN” etc.)
- *Page 2* – update on Dr. Wayne Hammond and MSIC’s Resiliency program – works to support staff and students in realizing their full potential through a strength-based model
- *Page 3* – Equity Continuum – now being embedded in all schools
- *Page 3* – AGO (Art Gallery of Ontario) partnership – focuses on grade four classes with access to Gallery and hands-on workshops as well
- *Page 4*- Faith Walks – reconstructing our understanding and knowledge of our communities; deeper awareness and understanding of communities in order to better serve our students and their families

Discussion –

Q: ICAC Community Co-chair keeps all MSIC newsletters and shares them with his and other school communities – they are wonderful communication tools for what happens in MSIC program; suggests other ICAC members do the same!

Q: Interested in CPAC (Cluster Parent Academy Committee) workshops, particularly the goal of helping parents to learn to navigate the school system – this is also part of what Maytree does; many parents tell us that the TDSB is one of the most opaque governmental organizations so anything we can do to support parents in accessing it is important; are there materials designed for CPACs to support this goal and, if so, can they be shared?

A: Two parents (potentially) from each school council in cluster attend CPAC monthly; they often ask us, “where can we learn more?” in terms of advocacy and navigating government systems; last month Toronto Public Health attended and did presentations which were great; MSIC also has set up CPAC Facebook pages for parent to parent and CPAC to CPAC communication – great tools

Q: Maytree has a program which has trained facilitators from communities across Toronto to work with their local communities – **this would perhaps be a good connection for CPACs?** Supporting them in finding points of entry to TDSB (and other levels of government)?

A: Continuing Education also provides some of these supports and programming; also suggest the Ministry of Education website for resources and the People for Education website is excellent for parents

- Ministry of Education Parents site: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/>
- People for Education
http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/?gclid=CLiqiJCZiq4CFRLGKgodxG_Z9g

ACTION ITEM:

ICAC Co-ordinator to connect MSIC CCP (Central Coordinating Principal) and Maytree Foundation (through ICAC rep) to examine potential opportunities for partnering and supporting CPACs.

Q: Are Somali parents part of MSIC?

A: Of course, all parents are welcomed both through program and through CPACs; goal of MSIC is to be as inclusive as possible

- Discussion around value in recognizing there are many networks across the city (both formal and informal) and trying to distribute information in various formats to them; point made that electronic access is only way of communication
- Importance of identifying these networks and communicating *effectively* with them

4. ICAC Co-ordinator’s Report

Handouts

- Special Education Information Sessions for parents
- Article – *What Americans Keep Ignoring About Finland’s School Success*
- Law Politics and Industry Conference – Canadian Flight Forum

- City of Toronto Budget article (in ICAC agenda package)
- Parent Involvement in VP Promotion process (initiated by PIAC)

Action Item Updates

- Summarized and to be continued next meeting

Meeting Adjourned

**Next ICAC Meeting –
Wednesday February 15th
9:30am – 12:30 pm
5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom**