

Inner City Advisory Committee Minutes Wednesday, March 05, 2014 9:30am to 12:30pm 5050 Yonge Street, Committee Room A	
In Attendance	Aim Mujib, Trustee Sheila Cary-Meagher, Trustee Howard Kaplan, Ingrid Palmer, Ellie Avishi, Carina Bleuer, David Clandfield, Nathan Gilbert, Nancy Goldman, Jann Houston, Jeff Kugler, Julia Myer, Cheryl Skovronek, Bob Spencer, Nancy Vogel
Regrets	Jennifer Arp, Lesley Johnston
Staff	Vicky Branco, Helen Fisher, Simona Emiliani, Kwabena Yafeu, Michael Griesz, Bonnie McDonald, Ruth Sischy, Sharlene Bourjot, Thomas Widstrand, Hilary Wollis, Stephanie Fearon, Maria Ginis, Shauna MacKendrick, Lise Medd, Omar Omar, Tevya Reid, Carl Riley, Kofi Sankofi, Vidya Shah
Guests	Director Donna Quan, Carol Boyle, Dani Carnevale.

Welcome, Introductions, Information Sharing and Announcements ICAC Co-Chairs

- Co-Chair Aim Mujib welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted the large turnout.
- Regrets were received from members Jennifer Arp and Lesley Johnston.
- Introductions were made around the table.
- Announcement:
Jann Houston from Toronto Public Health (TPH) addressed the recently launched [Urban Heart](#) tool developed at St. Michael's Hospital Centre for Research in Inner City Health.

Houston also noted that the new City of Toronto's "[Strong Neighbourhoods](#)" model will be considered by the [Community Development and Recreation Committee](#) (CDRC) around March 10th. The City will use this model to refine areas of need and to determine investments in services.

1. Approval of Agenda ICAC Co-Chairs

- Trustee Cary-Meagher asked that Director Quan's remarks be moved up the Agenda to Item 2. Moved, Howard Kaplan. Seconded, David Clandfield. Agenda approved as amended.

2. Donna Quan, Director of Education

- You have invited me to discuss the [Years of Action](#) (YOA) plan, as well as the [Board Improvement Plan](#) for Student (BIPSA). Another important document to highlight is our [Mental Health and Well-Being strategy](#). This is as important as the YOA and any other work, because it is addressing healthy relationships and healthy schools.

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- In 2006-2007, we started working on [Model Schools for Inner Cities](#) (MSIC) with the original 7 schools. I am so proud to see this program embedded into how we conduct business within the system.
- Is our work done? No. The gap continues to widen, the middle class is now the upper-lower class, and many options regarding pathways for students need to be discussed. We have to ask what does leveling the playing field mean for the full range of students at TDSB in 2014?
- Our challenge is with the students who are struggling, for whatever reason. How do we get them inside the frame? How can they contribute to the conversation?
- When I became Director, I made it clear that I am proud of our students and staff, and photos must represent our real students and real programs. The Board will no longer use stock photos. We have great people and programs in action. Let's show them.
- YOA: These actions support our belief in every student, every employee, every school, every day. We have to invest in those staff supporting our MSIC. We are strongly advocating the return of MSIC coaches to the program. We have a good program in place with 150 Learning Classroom Teachers (LCT). But we need to strengthen that effort with the return of 14 Coaches, which we hope the Board approves tonight.
- We have added staff inspiration and support as a priority. If we don't consider the staff, we are selling ourselves short on our \$3 billion investment.
- Education for sustainable development (ESD): This comprises things like poverty reduction, gender equality, equity, environmentalism. The concept comes out of work of UNESCO and its Millennial goals.
- How do we make decisions?
 - Our organizational chart for the Senior Team: This includes three Associate Directors. They play a very active role in conversations with Superintendents. They play a direct role in how schools operate. Superintendents report directly to an Associate Director. This flattens the decision making and increases the level of engagement.
- The goals of the YOA are evidence driven, and factual. There are metrics behind every goal. In a year, we should be able to analyze the data behind the actions.
- Income map of Toronto: I put this up to understand who we are serving, and how it has changed. You will note the closing of the arc of low income. This shows intensifying need. The changing income map of Toronto has an impact on TDSB students. There is an increased need for things like nutrition programs, after-school programs, child care, and early learning.

Comment: I believe that there is another slide that shows racial distribution across the City, and it matches the income distribution map almost exactly.

I did show that map at the recent ethno-cultural meeting. There is a strong correlation between income and racialized areas. There is an impact on access to things like transportation, health care, and community programs.

- School utilization rates: The Ministry of Education (MOE) expects schools to have a utilization rate of 80% or higher. To increase utilization rates, we look to place specialized programs for these facilities.
- Aboriginal student achievement: The First Nations population of persons under 15 years old is growing nine times faster than other any other population group in Canada. This population group has a key role in shaping our future demographic profile.

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- Student Achievement in the early years has a critical role in the YOA. We received approximately \$2 million in funding and have a staff person, Colleen Russell-Rawlins, to liaise with the City of Toronto to move child care outside of the permit system.
- 16 by 16: Our goal is to have secondary students earn 16 credits by age 16 years of age. This is linked to evidence that this level of achievement leads to a much higher chance of graduation.
- Special Needs categories: The YOA includes a commitment to reduce congregated classrooms by 50% . Initially, our teacher groups thought that this goal was cost savings driven. They asked: “Where are those teachers going?” Behind this goal is the thinking that youth who are integrated at school will be confident and independent to take on life’s challenges. Many of our Special Education programs stop at grade nine. Students need to be better prepared for the transition.
- Building Renewal: I don’t know which facility is going to have a major maintenance issue tomorrow. But I do know that 202 of our schools are in critical condition. Many students write me and send photos of the maintenance issues in their school.
- Societal outcomes do not belong to any one staff group. Reading doesn’t belong just to teachers. Achievement and success belongs to every aspect of the system.
- The Long Term program and accommodation plan will be presented to Trustees on approximately March 31.
- Institutional accountability: The Board has acted on the findings of the Jeffrey Baldwin Inquest. We are reinforcing our duty to report with every employee, and ensuring that staff at every level understand child welfare and care.
- Active transportation: We are pushing an active transportation model. Do schools have bike racks? Right now 236 schools have them. How do we promote active transportation?
- Strategy for Mental Health and Well-Being: We expect all staff to understand the foundations of mental health. Training is rolling out soon for all staff. We need to increase understanding and reduce stigma.
- Youth activism and student voice: I spend a lot of time with the student body. MSIC can encourage student voice within the program, and have strong student councils, and guide them to have a strong leadership voice. There should be a heavy emphasis on giving them voice and modeling power. This will help ensure future success for these students. 3 billion people on the planet are under age 25. In Ontario, 16% of the population is aged 13 to 25.
- Modernizing our Schools: All MSIC will have wi-fi capability by the end of this year.
- I expect each MSIC to be a world-class school, and to offer the best conditions for students to learn. Every day should be a red carpet day for those students, in terms of the physical conditions, resources, and tools available to these students.

Q: is this presentation available? Can it be posted?

A: Yes, it can.

Q: I’m delighted to see development of an Inner City Department. It is important to me to see the process for operationalizing it. What is the next step so that it becomes a reality?

A: I want to lay the foundation for the conversation this year. I think that by next January or February we will start with a fully functioning Inner City Department in mid-2014/15.

Q: When will the operationalizing of the program start?

A: I want to regroup in June with the key players. I think that the blueprint needs to be created. If ICAC invites me for a June meeting, we can discuss these building blocks and start to put them together. It could be a full day session.

Q: When you talk about a 10-year plan that outlives your term as Director. How can Trustees ensure that there is a 10 year plan that isn't changed? What ensures the sustainability of the plan?

A: I think that if we enshrine these things in our practices, it becomes an organic part of what we are doing, and it is sustained.

Q: We appreciate the time you've given to us. I am focusing on Special Education. We have significant difficulties getting our Inner City concerns heard at the [Special Education Advisory Committee \(SEAC\)](#). This is partly because we do not have a seat at that committee. How can we get our concerns voiced? Can we approach Uton Robinson with our Inner City concerns regarding special education?

A: Absolutely. Have you met Anne Seymour? Perhaps she would be the best fit for the conversation. Send the request to Uton Robinson, and see if he recommends meeting with Anne Seymour.

Comment: Would it be beneficial to look at what the original task force determined are the characteristics of a model school, and compare it to what we have now, and assess what works and what doesn't? We should go back and look, and contemporize the plan, or not, if that is not required. Eight years is a generation of kids. How, for example, does Full Day kindergarten (FDK) change things for MSIC students?

Q: I think there needs to be greater emphasis on working with outside agencies and partners. We need to make schools community hubs with shared facilities. This requires a greater level of interaction with City and the School Board. Do you see ways to make that more effective?

A: We do have a TDSB / City of Toronto task force. The conversations focus on building greater collaboration and shared space. We sit on several task forces with the City. Councillors have to advocate for these changes. The conversation is worth pushing. Following March break, the new boundaries and framework of priority areas will be presented.

Comment: I wanted to talk about the Income distribution map. Within these deep red areas of lowest income, there are sometimes middle-income suburban areas right across the street. I wonder if the two communities need to engage one another more, because right now they seem so separate. Maybe, within these neighbourhoods, there is an opportunity to dialogue and break down stereotypes, and to build community.

**3. Approval of Minutes: January and February 2014
ICAC Co-Chairs**

- The draft Minutes of the following meetings were distributed for review:
 - Wednesday, January 08, 2014
 - Thursday, February 06, 2014
- Moved, Nathan Gilbert. Seconded, David Clandfield. Approved.

4. Election of Community Co-Chair

- Hilary Wollis noted that Ingrid Palmer has been nominated for Co-chair of ICAC.
- No additional nominations were received from the floor. Nominations closed.

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- Ingrid Palmer: I am Co-chair of the School Council at George Webster Elementary, and Co-chair of the Cluster B3 Parent Academy Committee. I am committed to being part of the change I want to see. When I take on a new challenge, I'm all in.
- All in favour of Ingrid Palmer as the new Community co-Chair.
- Aim Mujib, out-going Co-chair, made some remarks:
I have spent almost 4 years with ICAC. Nancy Steinhauer, principal at George Webster encouraged me to seek to be elected to school council. That brought me here, to have the opportunity that now Ingrid has today. It took my time and sacrifice. I want to thank Trustee Sheila Cary-Meagher, who taught me so much. Also Vicky, she makes sure you are always in a safe place. I have tried to bring what I can to this group, especially because teachers made me successful, and they are so hard working. You are wonderful people. I wish you all the best.
- Vicky Branco and Trustee Sheila Cary-Meagher made a special presentation to Aim Mujib, thanking him for all of his work on behalf of ICAC during his three years as Co-Chair. Trustee Cary-Meagher presented a framed Certificate of Appreciation, and Branco presented Mujib with several books, to be donated to the George Webster school library in his name.

5. Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) Update MSIC Resource Team

- The [Parent Academy Conference](#) takes place on Saturday, April 5th. Flyers were distributed. There are two locations, Cedarbrae CI and Thistletown CI. This conference is developed for parents by parents. This experience helps parents build skills in planning and presentation. The conference is a partnership with Plan Canada.
- At the April 5th conference, we are offering a session with Toronto Public Library on how to start a small business.
- This year, the Conference date has been moved up by a month to catch more people before spring comes.
- MSIC staff are working with George Brown College regarding a program called Choices. It offers parents one week of workshops about learning styles, aptitudes, and individual career counseling. This pilot program will be offered to the C4 and B3 clusters, which are closer to the King St campus location. The program runs during the day. We are taking parents out of their comfort zone and having them attend at the college. But we are providing the bridge to support them there.

Comment: Bringing the parents into that college environment to break down the fear is excellent.

- Continuing Education is looking at an entrepreneurial workshop, to help parents learn about starting a business. It will start with the food business, and will be combined with a food handling course.
- STEM showcase: During Education Week, May 5-9, each MSIC will highlight a STEM program or activity within their school. This is an opportunity for Principals to feature great work and learning going on. The events will be open to the community.
- Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): This has been a two year project. It hasn't launched just yet. This is the first group to see the finished product. There will be a media event a month from now. Every school will receive 4 copies of this resource tool that helps families access community services across many sectors. The guides are organized by ward, so schools are accessing local services for parents and families. The guides will be downloadable from the web site. These copies were printed externally.
- Agencies can apply to be included in this tool through the web site. We have developed a protocol to check the links monthly.

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- Thank you to the MSIC team in the creation of this resource. The Community Support Workers (CSWs) worked very hard on the project. Every Ward is represented. Ward 12 has no MSIC, but our team created a book for that ward too. I want to thank the internal team in the MSIC office for doing the final edits. We were surprised by how many people are interested in this tool.

Q: We've talked about this at St Michael's Hospital. I think this is an outstanding tool because it makes a direct connection with the supports. What is Professional Development for this, especially for non-MSIC? And, could the [Parent Involvement Advisory Committee \(PIAC\)](#) and SEAC see it?

A: There is professional development for Superintendents, and they will roll out the resource to their family of schools. There is also a Power point presentation for Superintendents to use in the training. The tool has been to SEAC, and yes, we can come to PIAC to present it.

Q: My school completed a [Parents Reaching Out \(PRO\)](#) grant application last year, and we had the idea to apply for the regional grant. I need some mentorship for that. Could we have a workshop at the CPACs on how to prepare a package to present to an outside agency to partner on the larger grant?

A: We are in touch with the Ministry of Education, and they want to support the PRO grants for MSIC. The CSWs have received training on these grant applications. For the regional applications, (most are \$10,000 grants, the Lead Teachers and CSWs have experience in developing a proposal. This team is very skilled to support the CPACs with this workshop. They will look at putting this on the April / May agendas at CPACs.

Comment: The non-profit usually leads the grant writing process, and often, they come to you with the idea.

Comment: we need to go out to them, I think. It's not happening the other way.

Comment: I don't think non-profits know that groups of parents want to do this. We can approach them.

6. Committee Business ICAC Coordinator

- Hilary Wollis reviewed the package provided to members. Documents include a list of all TDSB committee meetings from March to June, and several articles of interest.
- Wollis noted that ICAC members have been visiting CPAC meetings to inform parents about ICAC and to invite them to participate. Upcoming meetings at Ryerson, Robert Service, DA Morrison, and Willow Park are booked.

7. Sub-Committee Reports

1. Special Education sub-committee:

- No Report
- The next meeting is set for Thursday, March 27th from 10:00am to 12:00pm in Room C at 5050 Yonge.
- Superintendent Uton Robinson will be invited to attend.
- Trustee Howard Kaplan asked to be added to the sub-committee.

2. International Languages sub-committee:

- No report, as lead Bob Spencer had to depart the meeting early.

3. Fairer Ways and Greater Means:

- David Clandfield gave the report.
- Clandfield is currently analyzing an extensive listing of Learning Opportunities Grant (LOG) funding, school by school. Once his analysis is complete, ICAC can craft a response.
- The report submitted to Trustees looks transparent, but is quite opaque. For instance, there are no explanations provided, and there are arbitrary amounts that are extrapolated from those calculations.
- The assumption appears to be that 70% of the LOG is spent on Model Schools. That is not actually what is stated in the report, and it is quite complex. I am currently at 30%. There are many curious things, for example, a Model School is defined as having an LOI up to 150, but there are 6 MSIC that are outside of the calculation. The secondary school data is charged to the LOG as though they are all MSIC, which is not the case.
- It is difficult to make a justification of the LOG spending on MSIC argument based on this data. This report is something for which the ICAC has been asking, it is something in the BIPSA, and it is on the Director's radar. But this does not affect spending for the next year, this is an accountability piece.
- The report indicates \$157 million in total LOG-DA spending, but that is larger than the grant itself.
- I think that without this, it will be hard to start building the plan the Director talked about. It will be difficult to build back in the lost positions, like coaches and LOI positions (90 original).

8. Trustee Report

Trustee Cary-Meagher reported that at the last budget meeting, she moved that \$750,000 be taken from one area and moved into restoring 8 coaches for MSIC. Instead of moving the money, the Director and Associate Director found the additional teachers. This represents an investment of approximately \$750,000. This puts the Coach positions back to 2005 levels.

Cary-Meagher noted that Trustee Kaplan also became direct in that meeting about the impact of coaches, and why staff needed to be increased for MSIC.

Trustee Cary-Meagher provided a quick update on the TDSB operational budget, which will be presented for approval at this evening's regular Board meeting. This year, cuts of \$12 million are required to balance the budget.

9. Adjournment

Moved, Howard Kaplan. Seconded, David Clandfield. Adjourned.