

ICAC Meeting Minutes
Thursday March 22, 2012
9:30 am – 12:30 pm

In attendance –

Nathan Gilbert, Jeff Kugler, Michael Griesz, Natasha Burford, David Clandfield, Sharlene Bourjot, Lisa Watson, Sheila Cary-Meagher, Chris Glover, Aim Mujib, Vincenza Pietropaolo, Lesley Johnston, Heather Johnson, Howard Kaplan, Alejandra Bravo,

Regrets-

Sejal Patel, Monika Etzler, Goerge Martell, Laure Green, Chris Penrose, Donna Quan

Guests –

Victoria Haist, Anna Furfaro-Monjezi, Saida Sabrie, Malini Singh, Adana (EAW)

Staff –

Manon Gardner, Vicky Branco, Cassie Bell, Craig Snider, Maria Yau

1. Welcome and Introductions –

Member announcements:

- **Roma Community Centre Fundraiser** – handout – April 7, 2012 5 – 10 pm Ballroom at the Gladstone Hotel – all welcome!
- **William Waters Symposium** – OISE – April 25th 6 – 8pm Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles Street West Toronto rsvp: ww.symposium.oise@utoronto.ca
- **Education Action West** – EAW is beginning a dialogue looking at service coordination in the N/W of Toronto; focus is youth ages 17 – 24 years who are disengaged and are seeking access points to get back into the system; if you are interested in being involved in this process, please contact Natasha Burford at:
- eaw.nburford@frontiercollege.ca

2. **Approval of draft meeting Agenda** – moved, N. Gilbert, seconded by D. Clandfield, approved unanimously

3. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (February 15, 2012)-** moved as amended by N. Gilbert, seconded by D. Clandfield, approved unanimously

4. ICAC Co-ordinator's Report –

- **Handouts** – Roma fundraiser flyer, Toronto Star article on Brookview Pediatric Clinic launch, Futures Table volunteer from ICAC, Social Planning Council Toronto's upcoming discussion- "Corporate Sponsorships"
- **TDSB Advertising Survey** – deadline is Friday April 6th; please respond and circulate widely!
- **"Action Items"** –
- **TO DO:** Invite Chief Academic Officer, Focussed Interventions Student Supports, K. Gravitis and TFSS Executive Director, Catherine

Parsonage, to an upcoming ICAC meeting to discuss Model School
Pediatric Health Initiative Clinics – funding and oversight

Previous meeting action items –

- *Page 1* “thank you” letter to Toronto City Council re: recent city budget- almost complete
- *Page 2* – Follow up with E. Mayhew re: January 16th SEAC meeting deferred motion going to PSSC pending legal opinion regarding principals’ compliance with regard to IEPs and legal recourse of parents; K. Forbes reported on advice provided by Board’s counsel. Following discussion, staff undertook to develop a list of best practices at the secondary level so teachers would be familiar with all aspects of their students’ IEPs. Gather ‘best practices’ regarding communication process for IEPs and developing a survey monkey
- *Page 3* – connect V. Branco and C. Skovronek - complete
- *Page 3* – connect M. Griesz and C. Penrose – complete
- *Page 3* – US Education Weekly article for ICAC – next ICAC meeting (in progress)
- *Page 9* – Special Ed Staff follow up (in progress)
- *Page 9* – ICAC Special Education Ad Hoc Work Group meeting – confirmed – *Monday April 2nd @ 6:30 pm, Committee Room B*

5. Previous “Action Item” – Finance Department – C. Snider (timed item) – see attached handouts in soft copies

- Handout – “2010-11 School Year Non-Public Funds Per Pupil” – trending continues from 09/10
- Looks at highest 150 on LOI and lowest 150 in elementary panel, as well as highest and lowest 29
- Non public funds means money schools collect at the school level
- Information is coming on breakdown at school level, but different schools report uniquely

Q: Question of arms-length charitable foundations?

A: Board has no access to this data, nor even which schools have foundations; all information is exchanged with the CRA (Canadian Revenue Agency) only; school councils and non-public funds reported through schools to TDSB (i.e., club fees, field trips, carnivals, pizza lunches etc.)

Q: Distinction between school council and non-public funds?

A: Schools must report both – key difference is level of control; staff and student funds organized through fundraisers – fiduciary responsibility (PSAB) to report these funds

Action Item:

C. snider to send ICAC Co-ordinator details of financial reporting required for school councils.

Q: Can we find out which schools have charitable organizations?

A: School principals know if their school has a charitable foundation or not; school council or group of alumni sometimes decide to create a foundation, but it is a separate financial entity from school and does not report through board processes; when PSAB was first introduced, some schools created these separate entities to avoid reporting to

the TDSB, but fiduciary responsibilities are huge and accountability mechanisms very time-consuming

Q: What happens to large fundraising balances at year end?

A: TDSB is working with schools to *not* keep large fundraising sums in bank, but to spend this money on kids now; both non-public funds and fundraising monies are encouraged to be spent this way

Q: What are the reporting categories for the “non-public” funds?

A: There are five – they include fees (i.e., football, music etc.), field trips, “other”, fundraising etc.

Action Item:

C. Snider to send ICAC Co-ordinator list of five categories for gathering and reporting on non-public funds as well as latest MoE draft policy guidelines on fees and fundraising.

Q: Have there been any updates regarding the Ministry of Education’s (MoE’s) policy review of corporate partnerships and donations?

A: Not yet, but there is a distinction between types of donations – large donations require receipts, small, informal donations do not; if a cheque is made out to the TDSB, funds are applied to school budget; if cheque is made out directly to school (i.e. name of school on cheque) then funds go into non-public funds account

Q: Are the MoE policy guidelines on fundraising finalized?

A: We have a document dated March 2011, but it is still marked “Draft” (see soft copy attached) – transparency of reporting is emphasized in this guideline; changes from previous draft include discussion around what *can* be fundraised for, for example, no capital that school board cannot afford to maintain or repair – this is likely as a result of the playground issue, but does open up the possibility of an endowment which includes funds for upkeep of capital building project

- Fundraising has to be directed towards *enhancements* of education, not necessities
- For example, fundraising can be geared towards computers (given that TDSB has already provided minimum amount), but not textbooks
- Final guidelines likely out by June or year end

Q: What about identifying schools with foundations?

A: Board is compiling reports from schools for October, could include request to principals to include this information

Action Item:

C. Snider to include request to principals to indicate whether or not their school has a charitable foundation for October report and bring results back to ICAC.

Q: Do schools with foundations have to report to the CRA how the funds are spent?

A: Foundations are complicated as parents come and go in schools; signing authority for account can be lost in moves leaving no one with accountability for foundation money – schools/parents/communities should think carefully before creating a charitable foundation.

6. MSIC Resource Team Update

- MSIC Research Update given at PSSC (Programs and School Services Committee) in February – very successful
- 33 new schools will be added to program in September 2012, meaning MSIC will encompass the highest 150 elementary schools on the LOI (Learning Opportunities Index)
- There will be a model school in every ward except 12

MSIC Research Update (Maria Yau)

- Results reflect looking at 120 current model and cluster schools
- Referred to ‘lessons learned’ from research done on seven original Model Schools
- Currently there is one year of data gathered from these 120 schools
- Each school received an individual research report based on their school’s unique data and centrally gathered data
- Maria Yau and CCP Branco are visiting schools and “unpacking” data for principals who will then share with their staff
- To provide context, report began by looking MSIC schools compared with non-MSIC schools – difference in demographics
- For example, using the EDI (Early Development Instrument) to measure school readiness, results showed an increase of 4% because percentage points are population based and therefore significant
- Which resources are added at this level? Welcome to Kindergarten bag, Hearing and Vision screening, access to Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs) etc.
- Resiliency surveys – last year managed only 30 – 40% of students due to cost
- Results showed 68% of kids are “ok”, 19% showing moderate levels of resiliency (this figure reflects thousands of students)
- Need to pay attention to these numbers – we can drill down to individual student level (principal only) in order to focus support
- Critical to develop relationships with most at-risk, vulnerable kids

Q: Does this feed into Special Education? For example, Gr. 5-8 survey – are any of those 15 – 20 kids identified as non-resilient on IEPs? (Individual Education Plans)

- 2% of kids who are most at-risk? Longitudinal study shows incarceration for many of them down the road
- Resiliency surveys provide very valuable information and add to broader picture of child – costs are \$3 per child however

Action Item –

Post and /or circulate MSIC research

Q: Attachment is key in resiliency – who is the significant adult in your life? When child identifies “I don’t have one” – this is an incredible moment to intervene and make a real difference

A: Yes, next steps include identifying someone in school to connect with child – not only teachers, but could be secretary, custodian etc.

Q: Our research shows kids most at risk or ‘non resilient’ are also at risk of developing addictions, drug use, mental health issues, gang activities etc. (TPH)

Q: Is resiliency data linked to MSIC?

A: Yes, data shows resiliency of children slowly increasing, especially in the first seven Model Schools – all of those supports have made a difference!

Q: How can the communities support their children?

A: Thank you – we are just starting to collect data – need more money to continue; Research will present this data at the upcoming Futures Conference - present to approximately 400 parents and discuss findings – also with CPACs (Cluster Parent Academy Committees); for example – Grade 5 is showing kids being very resilient and connected, but Grade 8 is the peak and then decreases

- Original 5 schools, first year survey was performed 73% of kids were showing good resiliency results, second year, 78% and third year 83%
- Work must continue because kids tend to struggle in Grade 6 – key turning point

Q: Kids in this area (non/ less resilient) are often labelled the ‘trouble-makers’ – they are the ones who most need care, attention, kindness, support

A: Absolutely – we are using this to emphasize a strengths-based approach with students through principals’ academy etc.; this is a process and will take time

Q: This resonates! Huge dropout in Spanish-speaking cohort currently – interventions needed now for much bigger pay-off later; track expenditure of \$3 per student resiliency survey/research balanced against better outcomes – these should not really be education dollars but come from another ministry

Q: Racism still exists – are we tracking this?

A: Yes, this data needs to be unpacked carefully and sensitively; likely 2 – 3 years before it is released publicly

Q: In Somali community, academic results were teacher’s responsibility, but child’s behaviour was whole community’s! All adults help raise kids so they only one direction to go – up!

A: EQAO – use of EQAO is not to measure students’ progress over time – it is a test used as a snapshot of where students are at a particular moment in time; compared with CAT4 – use it to measure foundation skills and allows for specific, annual interventions tailored to student’s needs; CAT4 in some grades kids are exceeding the grade norm! This is because CAT4 measures pure numeracy skills while EQAO tends to use language-based math which can be problematic for some children whose first language is not English

- Note: These research results compared show cultural? Social? Gaps between CAT4 and EQAO

Q: Physical needs are being tracked through Hearing and Vision Screening Clinics and Pediatric clinics (identify and intervene); Ministry of Education has provided some further funding to do more intensive research; parents having access to clinics alleviates stress

Key Questions out of Research Presentation for ICAC in terms of upcoming TDSB

Budget Discussions:

- Does ICAC/should ICAC lobby?
- Need MSIC updated Organizational Chart circulated (next ICAC)
- Superintendents need to be informed first and share with their schools and trustees; there will be a formal “welcome” to incoming schools soon
- Request that MSIC Research PowerPoint be sent to ICAC
- Request to link community resiliency to research

7. Presentation by TPH (Toronto Public Health) – *Newcomer Health in Toronto: Peter Dorfman and Liz Corson*

ACTION ITEM

ICAC Co-ordinator to circulate TPH presentation in soft copy to ICAC

- First comprehensive report on newcomer health
- Newcomers arrive healthier than their Canadian counterparts on many measures
- Unfortunately, subsequent decline in newcomer health
- Largest driver in this? Social determinants of Health (SDoH) and access to healthcare
- In four short years of being in Canada, level of health decreases and newcomers are twice as likely to be unemployed, as well as twice as likely to be low income earners
- 80% of newcomers are members of racialized groups
- Barriers? Canadian qualifications – how do you get them if you can't get a job? Also, very little if any family and social supports
- Barriers to healthcare? Cost (three month waiting period for OHIP, plus other barriers to accessing community healthcare), and cultural competency of healthcare providers, plus little if any translation/interpretation services
- Healthcare is a complex system! What is offered? By whom? Where? Etc.
- Some groups are more vulnerable to a rapid decline – i.e., refugees, region of origin, women, older people
- Social and economic exclusion can have a major impact on newcomers
- Full report is online:
- http://www.toronto.ca/health/map/pdf/global_city/global_city.pdf

Q: What do you mean by “access to healthcare”?

A: Three month wait period for any newcomer to access OHIP coverage; many advocating for abolition of this legislation

Q: What about recent changes to immigration policy?

A: Newcomers must now come for a specific job –closing off ‘extended family’ criteria, i.e., granting permission for husband and wife, not grandparents

- This can mean children may be separated from parents in the immigration process
- Impact from TPH’s perspective? How can we help support kids and their families?
- See handout – “8 Ways that Newcomer Families Separate”
- These individual stories are powerful – emotions that surface? Resentment, anger, loneliness, challenging!

Q: How are mental health issues linked to this process?

A: TPH has formed peer support groups – reluctance to speak about issues (they are personal and often painful) – many did not see this as “how can I develop my coping skills?”, but rather, “how can we change immigration process?”

What we learned:

- Loss of resiliency – depression

- Children and youth very vulnerable due to age and loss of attachment to parent; adjusting to life in a new country
- Important role of teachers! Teacher's acknowledgement and support impacts "success"
- Approximately 4500 elementary kids have arrived in last five years and live with one or neither parent (5-6%)
- What does this mean for teachers? This phenomenon is almost unrecognized in current literature; impacts social workers, settlement workers, guidance teachers etc.
- Webpages will be up and other training supports offered through TPH
- Professional training is key
- Godfrey Glasgow (TDSB Social Worker) has written a paper on how this phenomenon plays out in the Caribbean community
- "Tips" have been translated into 12 languages to help support
- TPH is trying to "name" this issue – key learning? Decision made thinking adjustment to immigrant experience would take a short time for children – it doesn't – impact is *huge*

Q: Any literature available from the 70's to do with unaccompanied minors from the Vietnamese refugees? (Also wondering about linking to Peel Toronto Public Health given their direct access to the airport and newcomer arrivals)

A: Didn't look specifically at unaccompanied minors in literature review

Q: Process means kids come, disconnect with parents, end up on Ontario Works, somewhat connected to Canadian culture, but not totally – end up "floating" – leads to isolation of youth

A: In peer groups, kids are able to share and realize this isn't just 'my' problem or my fault, this is a systemic issue – provides a 'aha' moment for many kids

A: Discussion around Miriam Makhniashvili– student from Forest Hill CI who disappeared - she had been separated from her parents and had only been in Canada a short while before she disappeared – how had the shock of being a newcomer impacted her and her family relationships? Expectations are often high of newcomer families – they immigrated to give their children the opportunity to succeed and if they struggle this can cause family strife; very complicated issue!

Action Items / Next Steps:

- *Connect this program (or awareness of it) to CPACs; peer support groups might come out of this for parents*
- *Move forward through staff development within TDSB; coordinate with TDSB staff so the word gets out this program is available*

Trustee Glover thanked Peter and Liz of TPH for coming and presenting – it was highly informative and well-presented.

Meeting Adjourned

**Next Meeting –
Thursday April 19th
6:30 – 9:30 pm
5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom**

