**TDSB Task Force on the success of Students of Somali Descent**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday July 31st, 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Time:</strong></th>
<th>6:00PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong></td>
<td>5050 Yonge Street – Cafeteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IN ATTENDANCE:**  


| **Minute Taker:** | Munira Abukar (for this meeting taking over Zahra Hassan) |

**AGENDA ITEMS**

| **1. Dinner** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>2. Welcome</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Haweiya Egeh chaired the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Meeting called to order at 6:04PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>3. Approval of Minutes (July 3rd, 2013)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Haweiya asked the question: What did people think of the recommendations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Marja- who was absent for three weeks said that the recommendation work looks great (recommendation A might be a bit too much) However, the recommendation need to be looked at in terms of a timeline (i.e. how many years, when do we start/stop, and what happens after the three to five year timelines expire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Haweiya responded that it will be a three year timeline and that once we finalize the recommendations they will be placed into the timeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ali- John (what’s reasonable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ John agrees that a timeline should be in place, he also believes that we should be bringing this to the board in September no later than October and agrees with the overall consensus of a three year timeline that was stated by Marja earlier.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abdi – some of these recommendations have a stage, i.e., heritage month should be done this year/others for other years

Research subcommittee working on time frame (years) Ahmed I - have a breakdown Y1, Y2, Y3 and see what is feasible, where it is feasible, and have that conversation.

Diane → curriculum # 3C (equity reps are already placed in every school)Question 4 – special education teachers/staff (criteria/identifying message being conveyed) – raises concerns

Haweiyaa & Ahmed – the idea is have the TDSB curriculum team working on materials, training teachers, implementing it, once the recommendation passes to assemble the team and have them trained (Diane goes into #3)

Maybe make #4 a subsequent of 3.

Curriculum team (designated to have the training off shoot of 5 as well)

Ali – curriculum is from province.

Diane – yes, but it’s malleable.

Ahmed – nothing in the curriculum on culture.

Hassan – agrees with Ahmed (conveying the need is the message in a stronger way – we need it).

Ahmed – curriculum needs its supports.

Curricular research/materials for 9 different communities (ie. Greek, Portuguese, etc)

Haweiyaa – how is that different than 5?

Abdi + Ahmed – want the space with the resources but also want those materials infused into the curriculum.

John – looking at other countries * James Banks where are there other pieces with materials that are
TIPPET libraries (librarians can work to develop the list of resources)

Ahmed – how do we refine the recommendations?

Diane - if you want it done, prioritize it.

Ali – early interventions that can happen right now in the classrooms, what can happen right away?

Haweiya – look @ “low lying fruit” but emphasis needs to be on in-class interventions

Abdi – #1 question the validity (curriculum) beating a dead horse not clear in its direction/by product.

John – #1 seems like a good/highlight

Haweiya – hanging on its own – comes across as an introduction. Perhaps make it a preamble instead of a recommendation

* #1 under curriculum won’t be a recommendation, but an introduction/goal/highlight that the research subcommittee will look into restructuring.

#4 → how we achieve #2 (Hassan’s point/Haweiya’s solution)

* #2 will be folded into #4 to avoid redundancy.

Marja – more resources for schools in high risk, underserved areas. Will TDSB look into that? – a few schools already did this.

Haweiya – things that are supposed to happen don’t, how do we address this?

Safe schools/school improvement – suspensions expulsions Public perception + reality happen to be true

Need a more specific language around this issue
Suspect/drift principals apply different philosophy on what to do with suspension/expulsion – maybe that’s an area to be fleshed out → culturally receptive pedagogy

Some kids/parents/members of the community feel targeted → certain principals are quick to respond negatively = people can't respond well to that school environment, etc)

- school improvement plans should not be private (question asked by Abdi, answered by Dianne)

- parent council #2 under general accountability

Taskforce recommendations need to play a central role/priority role within areas with high population of Somali-Canadians

**School improvement plans are/should be on the website.**

- need to talk to someone in that department

- #3 (supervisors and expulsions) nothing that holds/binds these recommendations (no metric measurements) maybe attach to a public accountability measure

Work within the existing structure/can’t do new hires

→ advisory group – report annually

- Early intervention column IEP review process might already be in existence

Abukar – shouldn’t rush to identify students as IEP/special and should recommend alternative methods (reading recovery, etc) that should diminish the rush of the identity team.

IEP without assessment. IEP purple book (loophole) a teacher MAY put/have an IEP program prior to assessment.

-process comes from special education department @ TDSB.

* reformulate the recommendations

* theoretical versus implementation
- #1 might fall under #4 (parent strategy)

- suggest in 4 back to 1 (lumping the special education doesn't make sense) no IEP should come into play until a thorough assessment is completed.

- enhanced communication strategy for parents.

#2 early intervention c everyday + template.

Post meeting to add/meet with stakeholders

| Discuss for the next meeting & the Next Meeting | The committee believed that there would be no need to meet until after Ramadan (which is after early August). The group will work through rewording and applying the changes discussed before the next meeting. One last consultation (community stakeholders consultation) will be held in August. |
| Adjourned | The meeting was adjourned by Co-Chair Haweiy at 7:31pm |