

**Name of Committee**: Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee (EPCAC)

**General Meeting**: Monday, January 25, 2021

A meeting of the Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee convened on Monday, January 25, 2021 from 6:35 pm to 7:48 pm on Zoom with Community Co-Chair Dennis Keshinro presiding.

| **Members in Attendance**:  **Staff Present:** | Sharon Beason (Parent), michael kerr (Colour of Poverty-Colour of Change), Dennis Keshinro (Community-Co-Chair), James Li (Trustee), Dan MacLean (Trustee) Catherine Maloney (Parent), Aleem Punja (Parent), Sophia Ruddock (Parent)  Irit Kelman (Manager, Human Rights Office), Precious Sidambe (Administrative Assistant) |
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| **Regrets**: | Pablo Vivanco (Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre), Tesfai (Success Beyond Limits) |

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| **ITEM** | **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS /**  **RECOMMENDATION/MOTION** |
| **Call to Order, Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands, Reading of the Meeting Norms and Approval of Minutes** | The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.  Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands and Meeting Norms were read.  The agenda was approved. |
| **Staff Lead: Introduction** | The committee was introduced to the new staff lead for EPCAC, Irit Kelman, Manager of the TDSB Human Rights Office. |
| **Approval of Minutes** | The minutes from the November 23, 2020 and January 25, 2021 meetings were approved. |
| **Trustee Co-Chair Update** | Trustee Co-Chair, Dan MacLean, gave an update to the committee. The Board distributed a family check-in survey to parents and guardians to get a sense of how everyone was doing.  There is also an additional survey being conducted by the Early Years department. The survey was sent to parents and guardians of JK to grade 6 students who do not currently have before-and-after school programing to determine if there is an interest and need to establish them in those communities.  Bell Lets Talk is recognized by the TDSB to raise awareness about mental health issues. The board promoted conversations with staff and students and provided resources.  Currently, there are 104 schools that are partially opened serving in over 700 students with special needs. These schools have public health nurses helping.  There’s a new initiative created by the TSDB community support workers. They have created a community support hub on the TDSB website that is designed to be a one-stop-shop for parents and guardians to learn about all the programs and supports that are in place for families.  For virtual students, the grade 3 CCAT-7 assessment has been delayed due to the lockdown.  At the beginning of the school year, Toronto Public Health identified 82 schools that were deemed high risk. An additional 13 schools were identified by the TDSB bringing the total to 95. Those schools were staffed to create lower student ratios in an effort to create a safer environment for them. Data confirmed these schools were at high risk as students tested positive for covid-19 at a rate twice as high as other elementary schools across the Board. |
| **Parent Co-Chair Election** | Aleem Punja was acclaimed Parent Co-Chair of the Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee. |
| **Membership and Terms of Reference** | The Committee revisited the topic of membership. There was a discussion around seeking additional members and how to advertise. Suggestions included through word of mouth, social media and through TDSB Connects. Staff will follow up with the relevant departments and report back to the committee.  Review of the terms of reference was discussed. Members expressed concerns about the lack of engagement and ability to make an impact. Members said the last TOR review felt overly bureaucratic and took too much time and energy. Therefore, it was decided that staff would send out the Terms of Reference to the committee for them to review individually and flag any potential revisions. |
| **Partnership with Grassroot Organizations in the Marginalized Communities** | The committee had a discussion around the partnership department and their process. A committee member raised a concern about the barriers for organizations to share information with the school community. The committee suggested asking someone from the Partnerships Department to present at a EPCAC meeting, as this would open up some doors for further discussion. |
| **Ward 4: Equitable Support for Children** | A committee member raised a concern about some students not having access to devices and not knowing who to contact. Trustee MacLean advised that the Board encourages parents to speak to their local Principal as there should be a device for each student. |
| **TDSB Policies Update** | Staff provided an update to the committee with respect to the policy review process at the Board. Initially, there were 28 policies that were targeted to be reviewed in the 2020/2021 school year, but due to covid-19, the process was paused. 16 policies will now be reviewed this year, including P031 and P034 for which the Human Rights Office is responsible. |
| **ThoughtExchange re Covid-19 Board Plans Debrief** | The committee had a debrief about the ThoughtExhachange that was shared with Community Advisory Committee members. The issue around the difficulties of physically reaching out to students during the pandemic was raised. An idea was to reach out to community organizations to help bridge that gap as they are already in the communities.  The idea to convene an inter-committee meeting with other community advisory committees was raised again. This would help the committees coordinate their efforts and be more aligned. The committee identified other community advisory committees that could be included. Trustee MacLean will reach out to staff to determine what would be involved and depending on the feedback, EPCAC can then reach out to other committees. |
| **Adjournment** | The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm. |