



Name of Committee: Early Years Community Advisory Committee (EYCAC)**Meeting Date: November 13, 2020**

A meeting of the Early Years Community Advisory Committee convened on November 13, 2020 from 10:00am to 12:00pm in a Virtual Zoom Meeting, with Trustee Co-Chair: Jennifer Story, Community Co-Chairs: Jill Oakes, Pam McArthur presiding.

Attendance via Zoom:

Jennifer Story (Trustee Co-Chair), Jill Oakes (Community Co-Chair/ YMCA Child Care), Pam McArthur (Community Co-Chair/ Runnymede Adventure Club), Rachel Chernos Lin (Trustee), Patricia Chorney Rubin (George Brown College), Anabela Ferreira (Woodgreen Child Care), Dan MacLean (Trustee), Coleen McGrath (Learning Enrichment Foundation LEF), Stephanie Nickle (Woodgreen Child Care), Kim Rogers (Sunshine Child Care), Laurie Ruscica (Toronto Public Library), Irena Setnik (Silver Creek Pre-School), and Patrina Stathopoulos (Dandyliion Daycare)

Also present were TDSB Staff: Joanne Davis (Manager and Policy Advisor, EarlyON Centres), Cynthia Grundmann (Senior Policy Advisor/Manager Early Years and Child Care Services), Sharon Hack (Child Care Services Manager), Liz Hoang (Child Care Services Manager), Nadejda Lekosky (Early Years Coordinator, Child Care Services)

Also present were: Alexander Brown (Chair /Trustee - Ward 12), Jeff deFreitas (PLASP Child Care Services), Shiromie Ganesh (Heart Beatz Child Care - Cliffcrest) and Lorrie Weddell (NYAD - Donwood)

Regrets:

Patty Domski (Toronto Public Library), Anastasia Poulis (Centrally Assigned Principal) and Ann Marie Schiraldi (Toronto Children's Services)

ITEM	DISCUSSION	RECOMMENDATION / MOTION
Welcome/Introductions		
Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands	<p>"We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognise the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples."</p>	
Confirmation of Quorum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quorum confirmed 	
Approval of Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agenda was passed. <p>Moved: Jill Oakes Seconded: Lorrie Weddell</p>	
Approval of Minutes- March 06, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minutes were accepted as presented: <p>Moved: Jennifer Story Seconded: Rachel Chernos Lin</p>	
Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed- No Conflicts were declared 	
Co-Chairs' Report	<p>Communication items (Co-Chairs'- Jill Oakes and Pam McArthur):</p> <p>Membership All agree to appoint Jeff de Freitas as the representative from PLASP Child Care Services to replace Sandy Edmonds.</p> <p>Membership All agree to appoint Shiromie Ganesh as the representative from Heart Beatz Child Care to replace Irene Sheridan.</p> <p>Membership All agree to appoint Lorrie Weddell as the representative from NYAD-Donwood to replace Nathalie Gruzalc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly meetings took place prior to and throughout summer with Jill Oakes, Pam McArthur, Patricia Chorney Rubin, TDSB Managers and Child Care Services team to plan and discuss the anticipated challenges, ongoing planning, and processes of preparing for the reopening of child cares and before- and after-school programs (BASP) 	

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	<p>in schools. Committee members shared their gratitude for this opportunity noting TDSB Managers were responsive to questions and advice.</p> <p>Some areas of focus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussed communication with teachers in shared space, caretakers and Principals. 2. Work and coordination required when sharing space, especially during COVID-19 pandemic 3. Transitions from morning into school and from school into after school and what that means for everybody. 4. Ongoing changes with Ministry of Education and Toronto Public Health requirements and directives as a result of changing COVID-19 context for both schools and child cares. 5. Overall reopening process was smooth considering the amount of information and pace of change. Things were put into place in the TDSB effectively and Managers were listening to the needs of the community and child care partners, and communicating regularly. 6. As members of the community it was helpful to understand the thoughts, processes and requirements of TDSB and the planning of reopening of child cares and schools. 7. Thinking through shared protocols and transitions even though every building and team is unique, supported the development of guiding principles across the system. 8. Applauding Early Years/Child Care Services team for their ongoing dedication and smooth rollout for many child care operators who reopened in July, August and September. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cynthia Grundmann shared on behalf of the TDSB Child Care Services team, who were all critical partners over the summer, her thanks to Jill Oakes, Pam McArthur and Patricia Chorney Rubin. Pam, Jill and Patricia participated in the weekly conversations which were critical in discussing issues to support the planning and reopening of child care and BASP in schools. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was important to have the voice of child care operators represented to ensure their needs were considered throughout TDSB’s reopening planning. • It was noted that the TDSB EYCAC is another important forum for these ongoing discussions. Those who would like to make suggestions and share thoughts and ideas before the next EYCAC meeting can reach out directly to the Child Care Services team. • The challenge with sharing space in schools and ensuring all cohorts are safe, was raised. Some members expressed they felt the Child Care Managers at both the TDSB and TCDSB have been wonderful, and that it’s important to come together and have a common goal. • It was shared that successes and struggles are often unique to individual schools, and staff dynamics. More work is needed in the sharing of communication (between child care and schools) when it involves children and COVID-specific circumstances. • Questions around communication protocols for Principals were raised. Staff shared there is a Toronto Public Health informed document for Principals outlining specific communication and reporting protocols and requirements for schools. • Members shared that when there is a positive case of COVID-19, child care operators are assigned a Toronto Public Health nurse/case worker. The school is assigned a different nurse/case worker for the same case, and as a result there is sometimes different messaging on exclusion or non-exclusion (isolation requirements). It was suggested that it would be best to have one case worker/nurse assigned to a school, instead of two so that communication is more consistent and efficient. • Trustee Co-Chair Story will speak to Trustee Donaldson who is the representative for Toronto Public Health to gather more information and bring this issue forward for further discussion. • Members of the Child Care Services team communicate and work regularly with Toronto Children Services and through TCS with Toronto Public Health to find ways to align practices and expectations in an effort to address any issues of incongruency. • Chair/Trustee Alexander Brown brought greetings to EYCAC and gave thanks on behalf of the Board for everyone’s continued volunteer efforts. 	

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	<p>It is important for the community, especially now, to help navigate through this and to continue sharing their experiences with TDSB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members thanked TDSB staff and Principals and mentioned the good relationships with Principals, caretakers and those that manage the shared space in schools. A challenge with Toronto Public Health and some of the protocols in place regarding the electronic screening process for children who attend afternoon child care still exists (e.g., Families need to screen for the school and then again for child care). 	
<p>TDSB Staff Updates:</p>	<p>Cynthia Grundmann, Senior Policy Advisor and Manager, Early Years and Child Care Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most BASPs have reopened thanks to child care operators' commitment to serving children and families. We understand the challenges and how much work it has been over the last few months to not only meet these requirements, but to pivot as required. On behalf of the school board thank you for your ongoing and unwavering commitment to serving children and families through these programs. Capacity and enrollment are a challenge for programs right now. There has been some additional funding through the City of Toronto and Province to support vacancies. As of November 13, 2020, 60,321 students between JK to Gr. 8 have opted to attend virtual school and approximately 100,880 students between JK to Gr. 8 attending bricks and mortar schools. Extended Day Programs have reopened all 18 programs. Currently, there are a significant number of vacancies across these sites. There is approximately 45% enrollment. Similar to other BASPs, staffing and regular absences have been challenging as well. Resilience Infrastructure Stream funding opportunity through the Provincial and Federal Government provides additional health and safety measures that are specific to COVID-19. The school board decided to have a balanced application to look at the needs of secondary schools, elementary schools and child care programs in schools. Based on the parameters of this stream and funding opportunity, increasing the availability of handwashing stations in exclusive space rooms was the most effective way to engage child care programs in this opportunity, and in alignment with the eligibility criteria 	

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	<p>outlined in the memo. A questionnaire was sent to over 350 child care partners inviting them to identify if they have the space and need for additional handwashing stations in their program space. Those additions will be put forward based on TDSBs overall inclusion criteria, which is equity driven.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed regulatory amendments - The Ministry of Education invited stakeholders to provide feedback and advice on proposed Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) regulatory changes. With proposed regulatory amendments or policy or legislative changes, TDSB often provides a submission or response looking at the school board perspective and related implications of any changes. Some of the key issues TDSB responded in relation to Ministry of Education proposed changes include the following: • Schedule 2 (A1) - The Ministry of Education is looking at different age groupings: As a school board staff have to consider what additional rooms or additional space would be required and the potential impact on additional caretaking and responsibilities. • Schedule 2 (A3) - As a school board, we continue to be committed to increasing access for families to BASP. Allowing authorized recreational programs to operate before school, which under the current regulation they are not permitted to do, will require additional space in schools which may result in additional caretaking. This would require additional coordination at both the local and system level when there are multiple programs in a school. TDSB recognizes the particularly challenging and vulnerable time this is for child cares given lower enrollment and concerns with program viability, thus must consider if this is the right time to open up this opportunity. • To open access to this program type without having some measures in place for parents and families to bring forward concerns about quality, operations and/or administration is concerning. • These programs are not funded through City of Toronto, so families don't have access to fee subsidies through the City's mechanism to help offset the cost for families who can't afford these programs. In our system, not all families can afford the full fee of authorized recreational 	

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	<p>programs and so there's an inherent equity issue that as a school board we must balance if/when increasing access to a particular program type.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDSB has a clear commitment to equity of access to BASPs. • Other issues for consideration and further deliberation include staff qualifications, training opportunities, ongoing professional development opportunities specifically kindergarten and school aged children. • Trustee Co-Chair Story mentioned that with limited resources available for child care may potentially compromise quality and accessibility of licensed child care programs. • It was clarified that TDSB would need to further consider the system-level impact of this approach. TDSB is not advocating for the reallocation of subsidy dollars to authorized recreation and skill building programs at this time. However, TDSB encourages the Ministry of Education to reconsider its commitment and approaches to equity of access for all families, across various BASPs. • Cynthia shared the response that the City of Toronto, Children's Services submitted to Economic and Community Development Committee regarding the CCEYA proposed regulatory changes being considered by the Ministry of Education. The City's response is now publicly available online and was shared with EYCAC members following this meeting. http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EC17.12 • A question was raised around the availability of funds through the resilience funding stream towards air quality. Specifically, it was asked if TDSB considered looking into the option of enhanced air conditioning at sites that are used most often for summer camps in schools as some operators work through the summer in their schools where air conditioning is not available. • Cynthia stated that the school board as a whole and facilities (Craig Snider) has put HVAC on their list, where appropriate. Facilities are looking at all the different elementary and secondary school needs that align with the eligibility criteria outlined in the memo, including HVAC. TDSB is using a strong equity lens to prioritize schools where this may be required. The Child Care Services team will continue to work closely 	

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	with Craig Snider and his team to look at what benefits can be offered to child care operators through this opportunity.	
Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patricia Chorney Rubin asked if the board is looking to delay the re-opening after the winter break with the higher numbers of COVID-19? • Cynthia will follow up with respect to any delays or school year calendar changes. Extended Day Programs will operate over the winter break during the week of December 28. The Child Care Services team will communicate with operators about any calendar changes that may impact them and their programs. • Cynthia expressed that on behalf of staff and the TDSB we wish you good health, wellness, safety, and well-being. 	
Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.	
Next Meeting Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 8, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. via Zoom 	