

**Name of Committee**: Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee

**Meeting Date**: 21 April 2023

An Emergency Meeting of the voting membership of the Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee convened on April 21, 2023 at 12:00 pm via Virtual Meeting (Parent Co-Chair Zoom) with Jacob Leibovitch and Laurie McAllister (Co-Chairs) presiding.

| **Membership****Attendance**: | Sarah Bogatie (Student, Avondale Alternative Secondary School; Secondary School Student Representative); Diana Grimaldos (Parent, Mountview Alternative Junior School, ASCAC Member); Serge Guschin (Parent, Beaches alternative School, ASCAC Member); Joanne Huber (Parent, High Park Alternative JS, ASCAC Member), Olga Ingrahm (Parent, Alternative Scarborough Education 1, ASCAC Member), Shelley Laskin (Trustee Ward 8, ASCAC Trustee Co-Chair); Jacob Leibovitch (Parent, ALPHA Alternative Junior School, ASCAC Co-Chair); Laurie McAllister (Parent, Avondale Secondary Alternative School, ASCAC Co-Chair) |
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| **Staff Lead:** | Peter Chang (TDSB System Superintendent) |
| **Other:**  | Associate Director Louise Sirisko (joined while meeting in progress) |

| **ITEM & DISCUSSION** | **ACTION ITEM/ NOTES** |
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| 1. **Land Acknowledgement**

**Welcome/ Introductions**  |  |
| 1. **Approval of Agenda**
* As the committee gathered it was announced that the TDSB released 132 new seats for elementary alternative schools
* The agenda was approved; moved by Sarah, seconded by Jacob
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| 1. **Declarations of Possible Conflicts**
* No conflicts were declared
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| 1. **2023/24 Elementary Alternative School Admissions Process**

A budget-focused recommendation, related to the process error which excluded applicants who self-identified as racialized, 2SLGBTQIA+, or having a disability, from full consideration. * Peter asked if the Co-Chairs wanted to discuss the timing of presenting any recommendation that was approved to a Board committee
* Co-Chairs declined and opted to maintain the agenda as approved and proceed with the recommendation (attached as Appendix A)
* the recommendation was approved
* Peter introduced Associate Director Louise Sirisko to the meeting
* Louise told the committee they would not be able to present the approved recommendation at the FBEC Special Meeting on Monday (April 24), offered sessions on procedure, and provided conflicting reasons to support the assertion that the recommendation could not go to FBEC, including Roberts Rules which Louise noted is a “very thick book”, asserting that Board Committee meeting agendas must be publicly posted a week in advance of the meeting, and that this recommendation must track to PSSC
* Shelley said that CACs do not appear at Special Meetings
* Laurie said ASCAC was already on the agenda for the FBEC Special Meeting for the secondary recommendation, and this new recommendation was clearly a budget recommendation. This was not the recommendation that the committee initially wanted to propose, but as time was of the essence the Committee pivoted to a budget recommendation to get on the earliest possible Board Committee meeting agenda
* Lousie and Peter maintained the recommendation needed to track to PSSC
* Laurie asked how they could possibly claim that the recommendation was not a budget recommendation, and expressed frustration at the way in which staff were using procedure against the committee rather than to facilitate
* Staff continued to assert that the recommendation was not budget-focused and was required to track to May 10 PSSC, rather than April 24 FBEC
* Peter told the committee that he told Jacob and Laurie on Monday there was not enough time to get the recommendation on the Special FBEC meeting agenda
* Laurie expressed frustration that Peter was not being fully transparent about that conversation, that in fact Peter told Jacob and Laurie he “didn’t know” what the process was for emergency recommendations and advised them to consult with Denise Joseph-Dowers, which they did. The decision to pivot to a budget recommendation and convene today’s meeting was based on the information received from Denise early in the week
* Shelley said that Jacob and Laurie received another email from Denise last night
* Laurie said no, they did not receive that email last night, they received it from Denise at 9:50 AM that morning but it did not speak to timing. Laurie and Jacob were specific about timing in their questions to Denise, and Denise never advised that timing was an issue, Denise only specified that recommendations for Monday’s FBEC needed to be budget-focused
* Laurie expressed frustration that staff were not being transparent in answering questions, did not give full information when asked, and moved the goalpost as soon as the committee met the requirement
* Jacob expressed frustration and moved to adjourn the meeting; the meeting was adjourned
 | *Notes to staff assertions:* *Robert’s Rules are not supporting procedures to the TDSB bylaws.* *As per S.5.5.5 of the TDSB by-laws, the deadline for disseminating agendas for Special Meetings is 24 hours, not one week, and for regular meetings the deadline is 3 days.**Co-Chairs noticed the May 10 PSSC agenda did not include the recommendation and inquired with staff on May 7. Staff advised that a decision was made by staff that ASCAC’s recommendation would track to the* ***next*** *FBEC, without advising the Co-Chairs, and supported this decision as “the recommendation had a financial/additional staffing consideration to it (which makes it an FBEC item, not PSSC)”, in opposition to their April 21 assertions.*  |

**Appendix A**

**Recommendation Approved by ASCAC on April 21, 2023**

**WHEREAS** the TDSB has committed to provide equity of access to learning opportunities for all students;

AND WHEREAS a breach of the 2023/24 centralized elementary alternative school admissions process excluded students who disclosed aspects of their identity which are protected by the *Human Rights Code,* and the TDSB has indicated that it may, where possible, allocate 89 currently available spaces to those students as a restorative measure;

AND WHEREAS the number of students excluded from the process based on their disclosure of race, disability and 2SLGBTQIA+ identity is greater than 89, and such potential allocation is neither equitable nor restorative, the Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee recommends that:

in its review and approval of the 2023/24 Operating Budget, the Board allocate appropriate funding and resources for reparative measures, to enable a resolution which is equitable, and restorative, for students disenfranchised by the 2023/24 centralized elementary alternative school admissions process.