

Ward 8 Forum – November 12, 2021 – Draft Meeting Notes

Special Guests - - jamie berrigan and Shayle Graham, TDSB Equity Coaches

Topic: Equity Conversations (Understanding Terms & Terminology)

As part of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, the TDSB is ensuring that every student receives equitable access to programs, resources and learning opportunities that lead to success. Building a common understanding of equity, anti-oppression and anti-racism enables us to identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and power dynamics that impact student achievement and well-being. This session explores these key terms (stereotype, prejudice, discrimination, oppression, race, racism, anti-racism, and anti-Black racism) along with our individual roles in reducing the educational disparities caused by systemic oppression. We welcome community members to engage in this learning with us and share their experiences and perspectives of how to further the equity, anti-oppression, and anti-racism work in their school communities.

Trustee Laskin welcomed everyone to the virtual ward form and introduced the Superintendents John Chasty, Andrew Howard and Denise Humphreys

FSLAC update from Lynne Le Blanc (French as a Second Language Advisory Committee)

- Small Collegiate – less than 600
- K-grade 3
- Keeping an eye on Community Spread
- Involved in PIAC conference and will include strategies for homework
- FSLAC anticipated good viable future
- Working to make FSLAC equitable across the board
- Geordie Sabbagh volunteered to be the alternate representative

PIAC update from Kaydeen Bankasingh and John Bakous (Parent Involvement Advisory Committee)

- 70k attending brand new 'virtual' board
- How are we supporting to keep virtual families engaged?
- Need a healthy understanding of all types of families and their situations
- Concerns need to be address immediately
- Ready, Set, Engage conference November 21-22
 - Speakers – emphasis on supporting local school council
 - How Covid is affecting your children
 - Equality
 - Q & A
 - ALL WELCOME

Presentation by **EQUITY TEAM - Equity Conversations (Understanding Terms & Terminology)**

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/ward8/docs/Shelley%20Laskin/2020%2011%2012%20Ward%208%20Forum%20Presentation%20TDSB%20Equity.pdf>

Learning Goals

What?

- Providing understanding of key terminology encompassing equity, anti-oppression and anti-racism work.

Why?

- Unpack how equity and anti-oppression work plays out in schools
- Reflect on systems and structures of oppression that impact students' success.

Equity, Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression Team

- How can we examine our biases?
- Unconscious Bias
 - Who goes to the office and how often?
 - PA Day end of November – need to move forward with report cards even if school started late
- Staff identifying their own bias
 - What language do we use?
 - What is on the classroom wall? What materials are being used?
- Need to differentiate teaching types
 - Address specific needs – for marginalized students and staff
- Next Steps: School Equity Goal
 - Moving forward, how might you use your lived experiences and understandings of equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression to continue your involvement in your school community?
 - What do you see as your role in the creation of your school's equity goal?

Q – How do you continue to get community representation?

Shelley – what is the parent's role?

A – Ensure all stake holders have a voice

- A Caring and Safe Committee which includes students, staff and community
- Goals to be shared with community
- OK to divert goals if needed

Q – Are there board funded workshops for teachers?

A – Yes –

- PA days Sept 1-3 discussed anti-black and anti-indigenous
- Anti-black racism and anti-oppression
- Equity Workshops will be held three times this year
- Equity Team supports teachers – co- teachers for example

Shelley – conferences are great for sharing with other parents

- We have a list of School Councils in the ward that are shared so that councils can share ideas and successes and seek information from each other

Superintendent Chasty - 8 years ago – started Urban indigenous studies

Teaching arts through indigenous lens

Grade 9 course 'expressing indigenous cultures' for 1 art option- replaces regular art course; 50/60 schools offer this program

Staff – 5 full days of learning lead by elders & Urban Indigenous Council

Q – How will resources/staff be allocated if the next switch from virtual to in person or vice versa results in numbers increasing for in person, perhaps due to guardians/parents being required to return to work in person? Will the staff return to their 'home schools', if the numbers pierce the caps set by the ministry? If not, what will be the process?

A – Potential Switching Date - Feb 16th – will depend on advice from Toronto Public Health

- Trying to create stability so there is no more upheaval or massive reorganization
- In September 500 staff moved to virtual

- 63k in virtual school
- More information will come in January

Q – How to ensure equitable access for students in the virtual learning environment? How to ensure their voices are heard? How to ensure the school council plays a positive role in engaging virtual parents and provide them with better support, so they don't feel like they are second class citizens? How do you address equity for families enrolled in remote learning? Especially access to virtual learning resources to enable additional help for online students, especially French immersion students, they are hardest hit by the pandemic. Is it possible to provide additional virtual learning resources, such as one on one virtual tutoring to ensure enough opportunity for speaking French? Any opportunity for virtual extra-curriculum activities to be included for online students, such as STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math)?

A –

- Superintendents remind Principals that all families in the school should receive same info – particularly school council info.
- School Council can create virtual positions on council
- Virtual meetings are larger – some advantage as more attend
- Large Tamil population – had Tamil speaker in for parents – also Mandarin
- Definitely involve parents
 - Find out challenges & therefore the response
 - Have dialogue in order to support
- Think MIRRORS, WINDOW & BRIDGE – kids should see themselves
- Community Workers not the same to all

Comment – Remembrance Day WWII – “good we entered or who know where we would be”

- Handled sensitively
- “lived” experiences

2020 Graduation

- Is there central team working on distributing diplomas – SOs say yes
- Paused while in red phase
- No answer right now – but active conversation – parent stresses the need to honour 2020 graduates

Q – Any process to see teacher via virtual if we have a surge?

A – back up plan for all elementary in-school teachers to pivot to remote learning if the need arises

- Will have some cases of simultaneous class/virtual for Quad 2 secondary
- Elementary teachers asked to be ready to go to digital platform i.e. – Covid Class – self-isolating

Q – Will schools close early for break?

A – No direction as yet – listen to TPH

- Decision will come from Ministry

Please send topics for next Ward Forum

“If you want to be lifted – lift up someone else”