



**Aboriginal Community Advisory Committee  
Minutes  
Date: September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
Location: 90 Croatia Street, Main Foyer  
Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Trustee Pamela Gough (ACAC Trustee Co-chair); Trustee Mari Rutka (ACAC Trustee Co-chair); Bela McPherson (ACAC Community Co-chair); Christine Monague (ACAC Community Co-chair, Howard Public School); ; Ed Sackaney (ACAC Elder); Cyndy Baskin (Parent Representative, Ryerson University); Susan Dion (Community Representative, York University, Faculty of Education, Aboriginal Education); Rob Lackie (Community Representative, York University, Centre for Aboriginal Student Services); Shane McLeod (Parent Representative, CR Marchant); Judy Rheame (Parent Representative, Humber College); Jennifer Sylvester (Parent Representative); J'net Cavanagh (Parent Representative, Centennial College); Kenneth Morden (Principal, Eastview Junior Public School); Vivian Roy (Native Child and Family Services of Toronto); Lisa Zwicker (Principal, First Nations Jr/Sr School of Toronto); Martha Toulouse (Ojibway Language Teacher (Bala Avenue Community School); Randy Dament (Parent Representative),

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

Christina Breen (Aboriginal Education Centre); Bonnie Johnston (Aboriginal Education Centre); Vandana Bharti (Parent and Community Engagement); Barbara-Ann Felschow (Aboriginal Education Centre); Heather Kere-Quelleng (Aboriginal Education Centre); Tanya Senk (Aboriginal Education Centre); Hannah Fowlie, (Aboriginal Education Centre); Jim Spyropoulos (Inclusive Schools and Equity Department);

**REGRETS:** Stephanie Bennett, Parent Representative,

**GUESTS:**

Jeff McDonald (Parent Representative & teacher at Regent Heights P.S.); Lance Logan- Keye (Toronto Council Fire); Andrea Chrisjohn (Toronto Council Fire); Karoline Johnson (Parent Representative & Toronto Council Fire).

**RECORDER:** Vandana Bharti (Parent and Community Engagement Office)

Item	Information/Discussion	Action or Recommendation
Traditional Opening/Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bela McPherson opened meeting at 6:15 p.m.</li> </ul> <p>A traditional opening and pipe ceremony was led by Aboriginal Elder Ed Sackaney to acknowledge the past accomplishments of the AEC and to embrace the future. The following perspectives were provided by Elder Sackaney:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ed Sackaney would like to establish a working agreement with the Toronto District School Board and the Aboriginal Education Centre. Ed Sackaney stated that the drop-out rate for Aboriginal students is high and he would like to see positive role models for Aboriginal youth</li> <li>- Ed would also like to see an increase in the number of Aboriginal people that work for the TDSB, and indicated the importance of Aboriginal voices with TDSB recruitment and human resources</li> <li>- Ed acknowledged the Aboriginal Centre Staff and how much he respected them and their hard work</li> <li>- Ed Sackaney referenced a recent article in the Toronto Star where Trustees acknowledged an increase in</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Vietnamese students in the TDSB and how the board has to find more Vietnamese teachers to serve the growing population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bela McPherson thanked Elder Sackaney, welcomed everyone at the meeting and introductions were made by all in attendance.</li> </ul>	
Approval of the Agenda	Agenda was approved by consensus	
Approval of the Minutes April 30, 2013	Minutes were approved by consensus	
Business Arising from the Minutes	<p><b>Future vision of the ACAC &amp; building and sustaining relationships with the TDSB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bela McPherson reported that she met with Jim Spyropoulos, Ed Sackaney and Christine Monague informally during the summer to discuss the last ACAC meeting held in May 2013. Bela also stated that another meeting also occurred on September 5<sup>th</sup> with the same people along with Bonnie Johnston and Barb Felschow</li> <li>- Bela McPherson reported that they could see the committee transitioning from an “advisory committee” to a “partnering committee” with the Toronto District School Board and is supportive of the initiative.</li> <li>- There were questions and reservations about the potential partnership and how it would work</li> <li>- Cyndy Baskin required clarification as to whether or not the TDSB is willing to go into a partnership with the committee. Jim Spyropoulos addressed the question indicating that the TDSB is committed to working with the committee and Aboriginal community.</li> <li>- Bela McPherson reassured the ACAC committee that the meetings were just discussions and that the intention of the group was to bring the discussion to the committee membership, but they needed to start the discussions to move forward and ensure that changes will be made and that issues addressed at the May 2013 meeting would not be repeated</li> <li>- Jim Spyropoulos suggested developing a memorandum and agreed to present the issues that arose with the committee to the TDSB and assist in moving the memorandum forward</li> <li>- The memorandum would be a working document and have to be agreed upon by both parties</li> <li>- Jim Spyropoulos clarified that TDSB staff can make decisions and start discussions with committees and the community but if they change or affect TDSB policies or procedures it would have to be taken to the board for approval. He wanted to address that point immediately to ensure that there were no misunderstandings in the future</li> <li>- Guests of Toronto Council Fire expressed discomfort in participating in this meeting as they had come to form a partnership and felt that this meeting was focused on the past and with the need to move forward. Bela McPherson apologized to the guests and explained that there were some residual issues that arose at the last meeting and in the best interest of the committee opened the discussions for the committee to share their thoughts and feelings about the issues in order to move forward in a good way.</li> <li>- Christine Monague mentioned that she may not agree and may still have residual feelings from what happened in the past but in the best interest of the committee that planning move forward</li> <li>- Cyndy Baskin asked if there were minutes available from the summer meeting and if those can be shared with the committee. Bela McPherson stated that she had detailed notes and to be transparent will share them with the committee</li> </ul>	<p>Bela McPherson to present the minutes from the summer meeting to the committee.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New ACAC “Working Committee” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Looking for people that are available to actively participate on the new “working committee” and can work on the <b>Memorandum of Understanding</b>. This committee would be responsible for reporting the progress to the whole ACAC committee.</li> <li>- Ed Sackaney would like the working committee to find a way within the MOU to culturally educate teachers on Aboriginal cultures and traditions.</li> <li>- John MacDonald suggested to the committee that it might be beneficial to look at the history of the relationship between the First Nations and the TDSB. He pointed out that it was the people that originally approached the TDSB to form a working relationship and that instead of reinventing the wheel the committee could build from programs and initiatives that are already in place</li> <li>- J’net Cavanagh inquired if it would be possible to have a cultural sensitivity training for teachers during a Personal Development day</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>Staff Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Spyropoulos, Superintendent, Inclusive Schools, Student, Parent and Community</li> <li>• Aboriginal Education Centre- New Central Coordinating Principal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To respect the tone of the meeting Jim Spyropoulos had no updates at the time and deferred to the new Central Coordinating Principal, Barbara-Ann Felschow.</li> <li>- Jim Spyropoulos took a moment to highlight that there was a special board meeting that evening which was vital for the Trustees Pamela Gough and Mari Rutka to attend however both decided that being present at the ACAC meeting and addressing the concerns of the committee was a higher priority</li> <li>- Jim Spyropoulos thanked the committee members for returning as well</li> <li>- Barbara-Ann Felschow wanted to start by acknowledging the work that Catherine Pawis accomplished and would like to build upon the foundation that Catherine built</li> <li>- Barbara-Ann Felschow brings to the table experience in revising systems, building partnerships and managing relationships</li> <li>- One of Barbara-Ann Felschow’s first initiatives are to initiate the use TDSB’s Partnership Agreement Form in order to formalize business as either Memorandum of Understanding’s or formal contracts of service delivery</li> <li>- Another goal of Barbara-Ann Felschow is to make the library accessible to everyone and to create a cohesive work environment</li> <li>- Barbara-Ann Felschow wanted to acknowledge the dedication, amazing and hard work of the Aboriginal Education Centre Staff and is looking into the budget to provide tools and resources for a more efficient work environment</li> <li>- The AEC referral form will be revised to reflect the actual services that the centre is delivering. There was a consensus that there were several services listed that were not offered by the AEC and asked for one or two committee members to review the form and provide feedback</li> <li>- Announcement of Fall Feast on Tuesday October 29th, 2013, open to everyone. Flyers were distributed</li> <li>- Announcement of Debwewin: An Indigenous digital storytelling project. Event takes place on October 9<sup>th</sup>. 2013 please RSVP to Kitty Sill by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013</li> <li>- Announcement of the APSIP event- which is half-day visit from Colleges and Universities on Wednesday October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013 9:30am -12:00 pm. Students, teachers and parents are welcome. Flyer was distributed.</li> </ul>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent and Community Engagement Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vandana Bharti mentioned that there will be a variety in the food offered and asked anyone on the committee to approach her with any dietary restrictions. Keeping the budget in mind she will try and offer a variety of dishes each meeting</li> <li>- Vandana Bharti mentioned that there are several announcements and will be sending out emails to the group</li> <li>- Vandana Bharti stated that she is currently updating the ACAC membership list and requested members to connect with her before the end of the meeting if they had any updated contact information (e.g., email addresses)</li> </ul>	
<p>Items for Discussion:</p>	<p>First Nations School of Toronto - Feasibility Study updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Christine Monague will inform the committee when the dates are scheduled and further discussion will be deferred to the next ACAC meeting on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013</li> </ul>	
<p>New and Other Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Schedule of ACAC Dates for 2013-2014</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting dates were approved by Consensus</li> <li>- No formal meeting in June or December</li> <li>- Regrets from Bela McPherson for October 22nd meeting, Christine Monague will Chair meeting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>Future Topics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Guest- John Chasty, Superintendent to present information regarding the NAC10 course</li> </ul>	
<p>Traditional Closing/Adjournment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bela McPherson ended the meeting at 9:05 pm</li> <li>▪ Traditional closing was done by Ed Sackaney.</li> </ul>	

**Next Meeting:** Aboriginal Education Centre October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013.

Visit the Aboriginal Community Advisory Committee webpage at [www.tdsb.on.ca/community/acac/](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/community/acac/)