



Committee of the Whole (Special)

Report No. 14

CW:15A
Tuesday, May 19, 2020.
Electronic Meeting

Members Present

Trustee Members Present: Robin Pilkey (Chair), Michelle Aarts, Alexander Brown, Rachel Chernos Lin, Stephanie Donaldson, Trixie Doyle, Harpreet Gill, Parthi Kandavel, Shelley Laskin, Dan MacLean, Christopher Mammoliti, Chris Moise, Patrick Nunziata, Yalini Rajakulasingam, David Smith, Anu Sriskandarajah, Jennifer Story, and Manna Wong

Trustees participated by electronic means in accordance with [amendments to Section 7 of Ontario Regulations 463/97, Electronic Meetings](#)

Regrets

Regrets were received from: Trustee James Li, Alexandra Lulka, Zakir Patel, and Chris Tonks

Other Members Present

Also Present: Ivy Deng (Student Trustee)

Part A: Committee Recommendations

No matters to report

Part B: Information Only

1. Call to Order and Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

An electronic meeting of the Committee of the Whole was convened on Tuesday, May 19, 2020 from 4:31 to 6:22 p.m., with Robin Pilkey presiding.

2. Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

3. Delegations

The following oral delegations were heard by the Committee:

re Permit Use of Schools

1. Judy Gargaro, Community Co-Chair, Community Use of Schools Community Advisory Committee (CUSAC)

re Safe and Timely Re-opening of Schools

1. Zoe Reichert, Student, Malvern Collegiate Institute

4. Report From the Director of Education

The Committee heard an oral update from the Director of Education that included the following:

- i. Government has today announced that school closures will continue for the rest of this current school year;
- ii. Contingency planning has been ongoing and staff have engaged many experts to help inform the TDSB plan and response, including those facilitated by the province;
- iii. We are charged with doing our best; with very limited information – and we often are left with more questions;
- iv. Decisions and steps are impacted by resources that are available or which the system can plan for; and at present, important announcements from the province have yet to take place – as the GSN has not yet been made public.;
- v. Contingency Planning – re; operations, child care, CAC, program, printed material, deployment of devices, partnerships, summer school;
- vi. Contingency Planning – re; re-opening;

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- Primary focus of a work team that has been struck, is to minimize safety and health risks; associated with school reopening – how will we navigate this process?
- **Physical Distancing** – In such a model only 12-15 students can fit in a typical classroom. As such alternate spaces are being looked at, as has alternating day learning, using outdoor spaces for instruction, modification of classroom setup, how to respond to and deal with recess (note that playground equipment is not routinely sanitized), restrictions around music and drama classes;
- **Cleanliness of Facility** – Additional caretaking staff will be required, surfaces will require additional cleaning – and frequency. During closure period regular outside care is being taken on our properties as well as water cleansing;
- **PPE Requirements** – Personal Protective Equipment are not presently mandated to use; but there may be pressure and expectation from partners that these be available – there are supply issues with these type of products....there may be a need to eliminate visitors being in the school buildings;
- **Personal Hygiene** – Hand wash stations in every classroom is likely a cost prohibitive consideration – signage and regular reminders will be in place.
- **Student Transportation** – Difficult to remain 6 metres apart on our school buses – means only 15 students can typically be on a bus at one time – this will mean changes (optional days, half days) – ISSUE: Most drivers are over 60 years of age (the highest risk age group) – children with special needs at times need additional aid to ride bus – posing a barrier to physical distancing
- **Special Education** – EA's who change diapers and other physical tasks....poses again a physical distancing challenge.
- **Nutrition** – may need to move away from hot meals and towards pre-packaged foods – to mitigate transmission and person to person contact with food options available in school settings/cafeterias.

- **Protocols will be updated** – pending further information and direction from Toronto Public Health
- **Retrieving Personal Belongings from Schools** – Plans are being developed in consultation with TPH on next steps...very detailed time schedules will be developed to minimize the number of people in our building at a time
- **Permits over Summer** – This is a ministry decision and we will await their direction on whether this is permissible. We continue to be governed by a 5 person limit for gathering – and are viewed as a non-essential and closed business. We would not support permit holders being allowed to clean – as this would be deemed “work of the bargaining unit”.
- Permit applications are still able to be made and received; for school related events – but with the caveat that any dates are pending the COVID context and what is allowed.
- Permit fees are being refunded during the period of school closure.

TEACHING & LEARNING ISSUES

- Focus has been on creating operating norms and guiding principles of learning in this current climate
- Our task will be to operationalize direction around reopening from the Ministry.
- **Many questions** – engaging students, understanding that needs will vary from school-to-school and student-to-student.

CHILD CARE & EARLY YEARS PROGRAM

- Five different types of programs are regularly operating in our schools.
- Child care centres are a stage 2 reopening; according to the government announcement – additional physical space may be required – given social distancing requirements
- We are communicating closely with our third party providers – their voice is needed prior to any decisions/directions being taken
- The Ministry of Education has told us no decision has been made on the 2019/2020 Parents Reaching Out grants – we have provided and will continue to update PIAC and school councils on the status of these grants.

DEPLOYMENT OF DEVICES & PARTNERSHIPS

- 65000 devices have been deployed;
- The Board is still open to receiving requests;
- Information will shortly be issued about summer school
- Online programming partnerships – any such partner must be approved centrally and not just at the local school level

5. Report From the Chair of the Board

The Committee heard an oral update from the Chair of the Board that included the following:

- i. A meeting that included the Chair, Vice-Chair, Associate Director Jackson and the Director took place last week with the City of Toronto's Chief Recovery Officer.
- ii. Identified the right staff to bring into tables that are being put into place as part of recovery planning as well as issues of direct interest and relevance to the TDSB.

6. Report From Representative on the City's Board of Health

The Committee heard an oral update from Trustee Donaldson, on behalf of the City of Toronto Board of Health, that a letter has now been sent from Chair of the Board of Health to the Ministry of Health regarding a motion passed at May 7, 2020 board of health meeting.

7. Report From the Directors on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association

The Committee heard an oral update from Trustee Donaldson, on behalf of the Directors of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association on activities of OPSBA. This update included information that the OPSBA President has provided a written response to the Minister's announcement regarding the decision to close schools for balance of the school year.

8. Report From the Chairs of the Governance and Policy Committee, the Program and School Services Committee, the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

No updates

9. Report From Representatives on the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee and the Special Education Advisory Committee

The Committee heard an oral update from Trustee Chernos Lin, on behalf of the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee stating that a Webinar is scheduled to take place this Thursday, May 21st. It is being offered in support of school council chairs. Trustees were reminded that they are welcome and also invited to attend and engage.

10. Reports From Student Trustees

No report

11. Emergency Motions

No Emergency Motions

12. Other Questions, Insights and Advice From Trustees to Staff

The Committee heard the following additional questions, insights and advice from Trustees to Staff:

i. Trustee Rajakulasingam

Asked a question regarding how the board can engage more effectively with communities where English is not their first language. In response, Staff remarked that they will recirculate information that was sent out in Trustee Weekly previously.

A question was asked about the status of students on suspension, pending expulsion. Staff indicated that this question had previously been responded to. Staff remarked that this response would be sourced and that the information would be shared with Trustees via Trustee Weekly

- ii. Trustee Mammoliti - A concern was raised and a question asked about how staff are assuring a consistent and secure/private platform is being used by the board for online instruction and meetings - as it was observed the use of such meeting methods is only increasing in this remote learning and working environment. In response staff indicated that these comments would be studied and a response would be brought forward to Trustees at a subsequent meeting of this committee.
- iii. Trustee Kandavel - Parents have remarked that Google Classroom and Bright space training recently provided by board staff was most helpful; and were asking if this could be expanded and provided again. As building capacity in parents will only help support students in this remote learning context, would this be possible. In response, staff indicated that these comments would be studied and a response would be brought forward to Trustees at a subsequent meeting of this committee.

13. Adjournment

On motion of Trustee Kandavel, seconded by Trustee Doyle, the meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Carried

Part C: Ongoing Matters

No matters to report

Submitted by: Robin Pilkey, Chair