



WE Charity/ME to WE Social Enterprises Inc Report on Educational Programming Partnerships March 23, 2021

To: Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: 6 April, 2021

Report No.: 04-21-4067

Strategic Directions

- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being
- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Transform Student Learning

Recommendation

It is recommended that the report outlining the TDSB's partnership with WE Charity and ME to WE Social Enterprises Inc. be received.

Context

ME to WE Social Enterprises ("ME to WE") and WE Charity are legally separate and independent entities. ME to WE is a partner of WE Charity, providing support by donating at least half of its profits to WE Charity. The other half is invested in the enterprise, offering socially conscious products and experiences.

At a Special Board Meeting on August 6, 2020, the Board passed a motion to suspend partnership agreements with WE Charity and ME to WE. The motion, which originated as an emergency motion from the Committee of the Whole on August 4, 2020, also stipulates that the Director review the terms of the current agreements between the TDSB, WE Charity, ME to WE and any other related organizations. The motion also requests a report be submitted to the Board, through the Committee of the Whole (now the Planning and Priorities Committee), on the scope, process, considerations, financial activity, and formal and informal connections between WE Charity, ME to WE and the TDSB. Full text of the Board resolution of August 6, 2020 is presented in Appendix A.

The TDSB had educational partnership agreements with WE Charity and ME to WE. Under the Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) documents, which were approved by the TDSB in accordance with the Educational Programming Partnerships Policy (P024) on March 1, 2018, WE Charity and ME to WE were to provide motivational speaker presentations for students and staff, and student leadership development programs. The services were to be provided in accordance with the following financial conditions: WE Charity presentations were to be delivered free of charge, while ME to WE student leadership development programs were billed as per the fee for service agreements. The two entities were also required to submit annual service reports to the TDSB, outlining the sessions delivered and total charges for the year.

In addition to these two educational partnerships, the TDSB also conducts other activities in connection with these two entities. For many years, TDSB schools have conducted fundraising and have issued donations to the WE Charity. TDSB schools have also made purchases from the Me to We Shop, Inc. through school fundraising accounts. A summary of all formal and informal connections between both organizations and the TDSB is provided in Appendix B. A summary of payments issued to WE Charity, ME to WE, and Free the Children is outlined in Appendix C.

The TDSB also had a previous partnership agreement with Free the Children (now WE Charity) dating back to September 2013.

In July 2020, the partnership agreements were suspended and later terminated by WE Charity and ME to WE. On July 28, 2020, WE Charity and ME to WE issued a notification that they will no longer be delivering educational partnership programming to the TDSB. On September 9, 2020, WE Charity and its Board of Directors announced that they were winding down the organization’s operations in Canada. The organization was to sell its assets to establish an endowment fund, to sustain the charity’s existing international humanitarian programs and digitization initiatives.

A literature review of key issues in global citizenship education and recommendations for future social justice work and partnerships is presented in Appendix D.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

N/A

Resource Implications

N/A

Communications Considerations

N/A

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

- Educational Programming Partnership Criteria Procedure (PR700)
- Educational Programming Partnerships Policy (P024)
- Educational Programming Partnerships Procedure (PR667)
- Fundraising Policy (P021)
- Fundraising Procedure (PR508)
- Vetting External Presentations Procedure (PR589)

Appendices

- Appendix A: August 6, 2020 Special Board Meeting Resolution
- Appendix B: WE Charity and ME to WE Formal and Informal Connections with the TDSB
- Appendix C: Summary of Payments to WE Charity and ME to WE
- Appendix D: Working Towards Anti-Oppressive Schools – Lessons from WE Charity: A Critical Review

From

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