

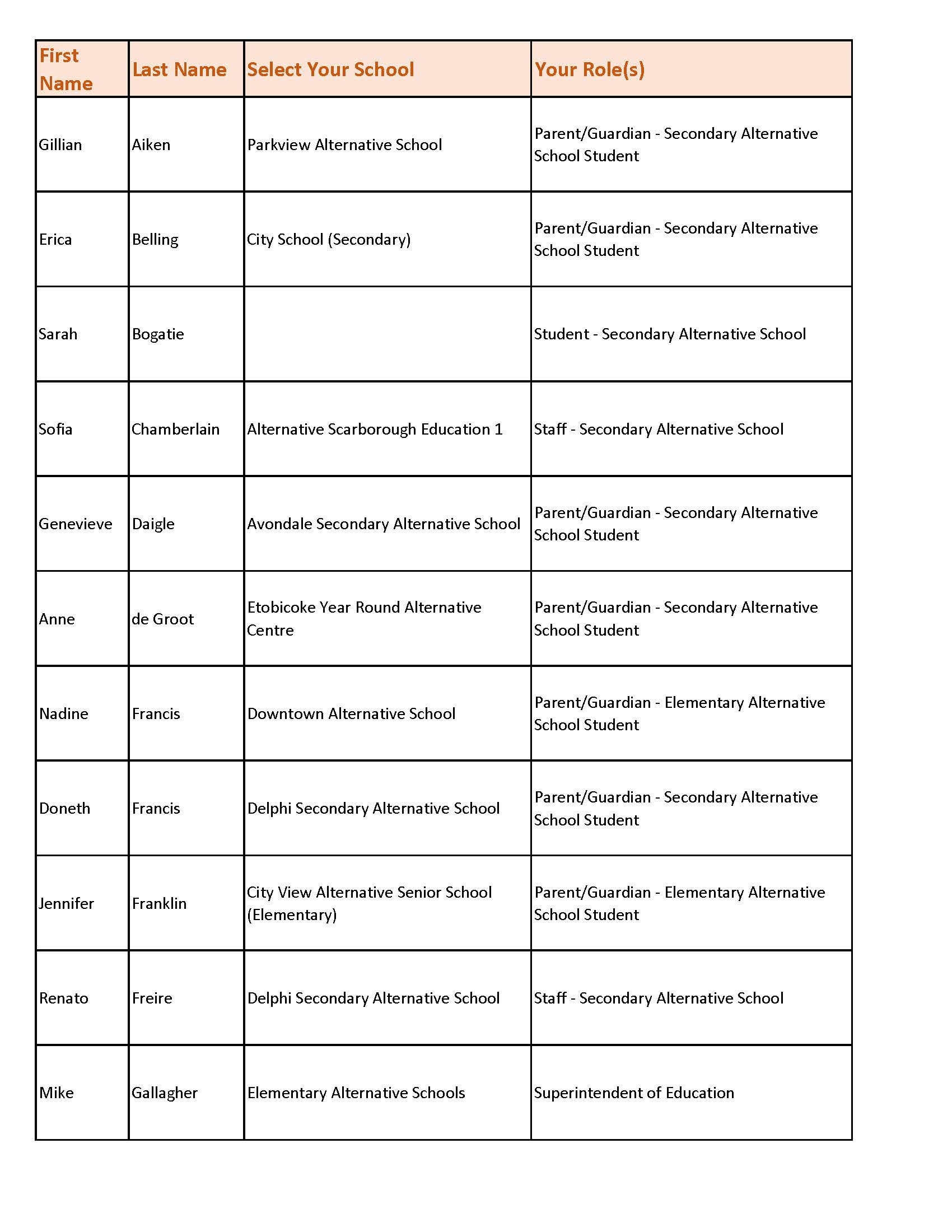
**Name of Committee**: Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee (ASCAC)

**Meeting Date**: 7 February 2022

A meeting of the Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee convened on Monday, February 7, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:10 p.m. via Virtual Meeting (Zoom) with Angela Matich and Laurie McAllister (Co-Chairs) presiding.

| **Membership**  **Attendance**: | Gaia Friedman (Student, Spectrum Alternative Senior School, ASCAC Elementary School Student Member), Joanne Huber (Parent, High Park Alternative JS, ASCAC Member), Olga Ingram (Parent, Alternative Scarborough Education 1, ASCAC Member), Shelley Laskin (Trustee Ward 8, ASCAC Trustee Member); Angela Matich (Parent, Equinox, ASCAC Co-Chair); Dan MacLean (Trustee Ward 2, ASCAC Member), Laurie McAllister (Parent, Avondale Secondary Alternative School, ASCAC Co-Chair) |
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| **Staff Resource Person:** | Peter Chang (System Superintendent, Interim) |
| **Recorder:** | Anna Catalano, ASCAC Committee Assistant |
| **Guests:** | Also present were: See Appendix A for the Participant List |
| **Regrets**: | Yo’av Kaplan (Parent, Avondale Secondary Alternative School, ASCAC Member), Ben Singer (Parent, Mountview Alternative JS, ASCAC Member), David Smith (Trustee Ward 17, ASCAC Member), Sara Wilken (Parent, Beaches Alternative & Horizon, ASCAC Member) |

| **ITEM** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION ITEM** |
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| **Land Acknowledgement & Welcome** | Laurie McAlister, ASCAC Co-Chair read the Land Acknowledgement. Laurie also welcomed everyone and introduced the Committee Members. |  |
| **Approval of Agenda** | The agenda was approved. |  |
| **Declarations of Possible Conflicts** | Peter Chang, ASCAC Staff Resource Person, explained what constitutes as conflict of interest at a community advisory committee meeting. Generally, if there is any direct personal connection to a particular session or item on the agenda then the voting member would disclose a conflict of interest and remove themselves from voting on the topic.  No conflicts were declared. |  |
| **UPDATE: TDSB Program & School Services Committee January 19, 2022 Meeting** | **UPDATE: TDSB Program & School Services Committee January 19, 2022 Meeting** Angela Matich, ASCAC Co-Chair provided an update on the January 19, 2022 Program and School Services Committee (PSSC) meeting. All three recommendations presented by ASCAC were approved and moved to next steps at the PSSC meeting. Next steps listed below. On February 2, 2002, these recommendations were also approved at the Board meeting.   1. ASCAC’s Recommendation 1: **TDSB Equitable Marketing** – TDSB Staff to Report Back to ASCAC by Early Fall 2022 2. ASCAC’s Recommendation 2: **TDSB Website - Find Your School**– TDSB Staff to Report Back to ASCAC by Spring 2022 3. ASCAC’s Recommendation 3: **Elementary Alt. Schools Enrolment Allocation** – TDSB Planning Staff to Attend the April 25 ASCAC Meeting to Discuss Further   Angela asked for clarification as to what is meant by “TDSB Staff to Report Back to ASCAC by Spring 2022”. Peter mentioned that TDSB staff will try to report back as soon as possible. Spring means it could be in May as departments also have other commitments.  Angela also asked if there will be discussions with TDSB Planning Staff prior to them attending the April 25 ASCAC meeting to clarify the data and information, as well as next steps for the elementary enrolment allocation initiative. Peter mentioned that he will work with staff and will update the Co-Chairs. Peter and Angela agreed that this presentation should be like the presentation that was provided in April 2021 regarding secondary alternative schools’ enrolment/staff allocations. |  |
| **ASCAC Secondary Alternative Schools Sub-Committee**  Update on meeting, action plans and proposals | ASCAC Secondary Alternative Schools Sub-Committee  Laurie McAllister, Secondary Alternative School Parent Co-Chair provided an update regarding the first ASCAC Secondary Alternative Schools Sub-Committee that was held on January 13, 2022 meeting.  Laurie mentioned that a secondary alternative school student, who attended the sub-committee meeting, was intending to create a student survey as another means for gathering stories from students for those who feel too vulnerable or uncomfortable sharing their stories. The results would be shared at PSSC.  Laurie gave an overview as to the ASCAC Secondary Alternative Schools Sub-Committee’s recommendation which is included in Part A of this report. She mentioned that:   * The recommendation focuses on supporting the student’s well-being for a population of students who are most in-risk in the Board * How the pandemic has impacted these students disproportionally * How important student re-engagement is * At a time like this, need to keep pathways to re-engagement open. Not the right time to be closing alternative means for re-engagement back into the system   **ASCAC Proposal: Secondary Alternative School Staffing Recommendation**  **Whereas:**  Compared to the TDSB general population, students in secondary alternative schools are “much more at-risk”1, and the COVID-19 pandemic has both amplified the student mental health crisis and disproportionately impacted the communities served by secondary alternative schools;  The TDSB’s Pandemic Recovery Plan acknowledges that “prioritizing mental health and well-being as we re-engage and integrate students who have been most impacted by the pandemic is essential”, and, its Strategic Plan has committed to support student mental health and well-being, and to ensure that every school offers a wide range of programming and safe, welcoming inclusive learning environments for all students;  The TDSB has existing safe spaces in secondary alternative schools that it can utilize as a component in a student re-engagement plan, and to meet its goals in the Strategic Plan;  And further destabilization of secondary alternative schools would impact some of the most in-risk students within the Board:  **The Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee recommends that the TDSB consider program viability as the primary driver for staffing secondary alternative schools, rather than projected enrolment, until the Secondary Alternative Schools Review is complete, and its recommendations related to staffing are implemented.**  *\*Program viability means that the school can support and attract students by offering the required courses for OSSD, options for credit recovery, and a reasonable number of electives.*   1. Brown, S. R. (2017). *Review of alternative schools: Research analysis 2016-17*. (Research Report No. 17/18-10). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Toronto District School Board   Trustee Laskin, ASCAC Trustee Co-Chair, mentioned that she supports this recommendation and thanked Laurie for all her hard work. Trustee Laskin also mentioned that when the recommendation is presented to PSSC, the committee will want to know what program viability means. Does it mean adding staff to each of the alternative secondary schools?  Based on the conversations that were had last year, ASCAC/TDSB is aware that some secondary alternative schools can’t offer full programming based on low enrolment. Students draw the staffing; however, if schools don’t have enough staffing schools can’t offer enough programming to attract more students.  Trustee Laskin wanted to ensure that Laurie is prepared with more granular concepts when the recommendation is presented to PSSC. This will assist in answering any questions.  Trustee MacLean, ASCAC Trustee Member, agreed with Trustee Laskin’s comments. There could be up to nine PSSC Trustee members who will be at the meeting and it is recommended that more concrete/clearer information is used for the recommendation.  Laurie mentioned that at the sub-committee meeting there were discussions around what the recommendation should look like regarding the numbers especially under these circumstances we are in now. Originally the recommendation included: at least three teachers, a Child and Youth Counsellor (CYC) or a Child and Youth Worker (CYW) and an Itinerant Resource Teacher (IRT) at each secondary alternative school. The ASCAC Secondary Alternative Schools Sub-Committee then left the detailed staff information out of the recommendation so that the TDSB could determine the needs of each specific school.  Angela agreed with Laurie’s comment that every school is different and that the recommendations should not include the number of staff required.  Another parent mentioned that a blurb should be included with the recommendation stating that at least three teachers are required to make a school viable.  It was recommended that the statement, which was removed, be added back to the recommendation, and discussed further. The statement read as follows: “A secondary alternative school would generally not be considered viable with less than three teachers, a CYW, and an IRT.”  A secondary alternative schoolteacher mentioned that contemplating staff cuts during a pandemic is not correct. Due to COVID, enrolment has declined in the secondary alternative schools. The staff member finds it unfair that they are not being given the opportunity to increase enrolment as we come out of this pandemic. Secondary alternative schools were forced to follow the model that TDSB secondary schools were following. Secondary alternative schools can now go back to their model. During the pandemic there was nothing unique about the program that was being offered, hence the decline in enrolment. The staff member realizes that their statement doesn’t affect the motion but hopes that their message is shared with the Board.  Denis Lopes, Principal for Secondary Alternative Schools East, mentioned that discussions about program viability needs to take place with TDSB staff at different levels. A distinction needs to be made regarding the schools that offer programs for older students and who would like to complete a secondary school career at a school different from the school they started at. There is also a group of students who are looking for a pathway from grade 8 to grade 9.  Understanding and demonstrating that there are two distinct groups of students will allow TDSB staff to look at program viability based on the needs of the students and schools. Trying to make a statement that covers every program and school at this stage is premature.  It was suggested that the staffing allocation be left for TDSB staff to determine though a preamble of what is required to provide viable programs for the two distinctive groups of students.  Trustee Laskin agreed with Denis and the secondary alternative schoolteacher who mentioned that we are not in “normal” times now. She is not sure when parents and students are making decisions for next year. At this time, it is difficult to predict what September 2022 will look like – will it be more “normal”. One of the key messages from tonight’s meeting is that there needs to be some stability and increased enrolment. This is part of the Secondary School Review – how do you maintain and ensure options for different groups of students who have varying needs across the system so that the secondary alternative schools meet their purpose and meet student needs through to graduation.  Trustee Laskin liked the option Denis provided and she recommended that the asterisk copy be replaced with what Denis provided or add another point under “Whereas”.  Trustee Laskin suggested that information about what is needed to provide viable programs should be included (e.g., one school may need 3 FTEs, while another may need 6). This information would give the committee an idea of what is meant by program “viability”. It is also important that TDSB staff are at the February 23 PSSC meeting. They can help the committee and support staff reviewing this understand what program viability actually means and that students have an appropriate place to go to as we come out of this pandemic.  Based on the recommendations and suggestions, Laurie made some updates to the original recommendation.  Following is the final version that will be presented to the February 23, 2022 PSSC meeting:  **Secondary Alternative School Staffing**  **Whereas:**  Compared to the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) general population, students in secondary alternative schools are “much more at-risk”1, and the COVID-19 pandemic has both amplified the student mental health crisis and disproportionately impacted the communities served by secondary alternative schools;  The TDSB’s Pandemic Recovery Plan acknowledges that “prioritizing mental health and well-being as we re-engage and integrate students who have been most impacted by the pandemic is essential”, and, its Strategic Plan has committed to support student mental health and well-being, and to ensure that every school offers a wide range of programming and safe, welcoming inclusive learning environments for all students;  The TDSB has existing safe spaces in secondary alternative schools that it can utilize as a component in a student re-engagement plan, and to meet its goals in the Strategic Plan;  Program viability means different things to different secondary alternative schools depending on its programs and the populations that it serves\*.  And further destabilization of secondary alternative schools would impact some of the most in-risk students within the Board;  **The Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee recommends that the Toronto District School Board consider program viability as the primary driver for staffing secondary alternative schools, rather than projected enrolment, until the Secondary Alternative Schools Review is completed and its recommendations related to staffing are implemented.**  *\*For example, a secondary alternative school providing a pathway for grade 8 students requires at least six teachers to provide the curriculum opportunities for the grade 9 and 10 destreamed courses; a secondary alternative school providing opportunities to students coming from other secondary schools requires at least three teachers. For both models each school needs a Child and Youth Counsellor and or a Child and Youth Worker and an Itinerant Resource. Teacher that can be shared between two schools. Programs which are viable can support and attract students by offering the required courses for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), options for credit recovery, and a reasonable number of electives.*   1. Brown, S. R. (2017). *Review of alternative schools: Research analysis 2016-17*. (Research Report No. 17/18-10). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Toronto District School Board |  |
| **ASCAC Equity Sub-Committee** | *In Fall 2021 a Community Outreach Taskforce was created. The taskforce and the equity sub-committee met in January 2022 and developed a couple of recommendations. The motion is as follows:*  ***TDSB Community Outreach Ambassadors Recommendation:***  *ASCAC recommends TDSB invest in creating a dedicated team of Community Outreach Ambassadors. The ambassadors would be tasked with going out into different communities to better educate them about all the different options available to them within the Board, including, but not limited to alternative schools, specialty schools and programs, academies, French Immersion, mental health programs, etc. This more targeted and personalized one-on-one approach by the Board may greatly improve information reaching those communities who are currently underserved through existing TDSB marketing approaches.*  *Example:*  *TDSB Community Outreach Ambassadors could attend and present at TDSB daycare annual general meetings (AGM), the Early On Centre AGM, hold information sessions at local community and/or religious centres, as well at other places people tend to congregate and socialize.*  Trustee Laskin mentioned that she understood the reason for the recommendation though the PSSC can not make any motions unless there is a funding source. Are these new staff or TDSB staff?  Angela isn’t sure if there is anyone currently in the TDSB that this would be within their scope.  Trustee Laskin mentioned that “… TDSB invest in creating a dedicated team…” should be changed. The purpose of the recommendation is to ensure this information is out in the community; therefore, should state that TDSB defines whose responsibility it is to do outreach. The way it is written now, an investment is being asked (i.e., money for staffing, resources, etc.). Again, Committees can not pass a recommendation without a funding source.  Trustee Laskin asked if the ask is to have dedicated resources to assist with this. Angela agreed that this is what the ask is and updated the recommendation. Please see below for the final version.  Peter mentioned that the TDSB has Community Support Workers and not many. They are staff who do something similar and mostly servicing students who are in the model schools’ area. This would be new staff who would service the areas outside of the model school’s area. Was the expectation that existing staff would be allocated this task, or did ASCAC want TDSB staff to review the recommendation and report back to ASCAC whether it’s viable?  Trustee MacLean mentioned that PSSC members may ask TDSB staff what is being done now that is attempting to achieve this goal. If the TDSB is not doing enough, then how can TDSB improve. If this means additional staff is required, then the recommendation may be sent to the Finance, Budget, and Enrolment Committee (FBEC) to see if they will commit the revenue to support the additional staff required.  Angela mentioned that as parent/guardian and student volunteers, ASCAC members are not sure what exactly is being done currently by the Board. This recommendation goes above the Board’s current flat one-way communications marketing, and advertising campaigns, like cultural newsprint ads, TDSB website, etc. The community outreach ambassadors would enable proactive two-way communications. They would have in-depth knowledge of what’s available and be able to have conversations with communities directly, especially to the disadvantaged communities who are not being served through the outreach the TDSB is doing now.  Trustee MacLean acknowledged that there are some communities who we like to connect with better and recognize that the TDSB has work to do. Though we still need to know where these communities are not connecting with and physically go there to provide information about the programs available at the TDSB. This does address a recognized area of work that the TDSB is trying to do and could help the TDSB move along in a positive direction.  This is a first step in many steps and may not be launched anytime soon because of the amount of information and the various staff and departments that would be involved.  *Following is the final version that will be presented to the February 23, 2022 PSSC meeting:*  **TDSB Community Outreach Ambassadors**  ASCAC recommends that the TDSB dedicate resources to have Community Outreach Ambassadors. The ambassadors would be tasked with going out into different communities to better educate them about all the different options available to them within the Board, including, but not limited to alternative schools, specialty schools and programs, academies, French Immersion, mental health programs, etc. This more targeted and personalized one-on-one approach by the Board may greatly improve information reaching those communities who are currently underserved through existing TDSB marketing approaches.  This final version of the recommendation was voted on by the ASCAC Members and passed. |  |
|  | **District Created Alternative Schools Recommendation**  ASCAC recommends when TDSB starts its review of [Policy 062](https://ppf.tdsb.on.ca/uploads/files/live/91/1595.pdf) and [Procedure 582](https://ppf.tdsb.on.ca/uploads/files/live/91/1596.pdf) (tentatively scheduled for 2022-2023), that the Board consider updating [Procedure 584, Section 4.5](https://ppf.tdsb.on.ca/uploads/files/live/91/1596.pdf) to help reduce barriers and improve equity of access to alternative schools. In addition to existing local community group advocacy for launching new alternative schools, ASCAC recommends that the Board consider adding district created alternative schools as well. TDSB could duplicate existing alternative schools with successful well-established models in Board identified underserved areas that may benefit from better access to these learning options.  ASCAC’s Community Building and Equity Sub-Committees know there will be a review of Policy 062 (P062) and Procedure 582 (PR582). Unfortunately, it keeps getting deferred for the last few years due to the pandemic. The reason this recommendation was raised is because of equity concerns that exclusively creating new alternative schools in TDSB by community advocacy groups is extremely difficult. Underserved areas may need district created alternative schools to help fill the gaps and improve access to these programs.  Peter mentioned that a program review would look at what this recommendation is asking.  P062 is for all alternative schools and is quite global in the language. The work that ASCAC is asking the staff to do is more operational.  Peter asked if ASCAC would like more details built into the policy so that the language around creating district alternative schools are also incorporated.  Angela mentioned that this recommendation was inspired by the specialized policy revie which made similar changes. It clarified within the language that it’s not just community based, but also district created to help fill the equity gap. Specialized and alternative schools tend to be in certain parts of the city or within certain demographics. This is partially due because those communities have volunteers who have the spare time and resources to dedicate a large amount of their time to advocate for the Board to launch these types of schools.  Peter mentioned that only elementary alternative schools are from community groups, secondary alternative schools are district created. Angela mentioned that P062 and PR582 don’t state this.  Trustee Laskin mentioned that she doesn’t understand the reason for this recommendation because when the review begins the language can be revised at that time.  Angela mentioned that the review for P062 keeps getting deferred to the next school year. When P062 is finally reviewed, this recommendation should be included from the onset of the review and be part of the consultation process.  This is a highly unusual ask because it is outside the consultation process. Though a committee can do whatever a committee wishes to do. Procedures are also staff driven and the Trustees do not get involved with procedures – all they do is policy which is also driven by staff and there are procedures that need to be followed.  Angela asked if this recommendation could be placed on hold until the review of P062. Trustee Laskin agreed that it should be placed on hold. She also mentioned that ASCAC will have a role in any consultation process for P062 and PR582.  Peter asked that this conversation be captured in the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) report as there will be documentation that it was discussed by ASCAC.  Trustee MacLean also mentioned that including this in the CAC report will be information for the Trustees to know that this will be brought forward to the Governance & Policy Committee (GPC).  To put this recommendation on hold was voted on by the ASCAC Members and passed. | Anna to add this information to Section B of the CAC report. |
| **ASCAC Community Building Sub-Committee** | **The Elementary Alternative School Council Share & Learn Zoom Workshop**   * Took place on Tuesday, February 1, 2022; one to two school community representatives from each elementary alternative school were invited to attend the workshop * First pilot and was a success with 13 of the 19 registered to participate and 10 attending the workshop – 16 participants in total. * Topics included: an overview of ASCAC; guest speaker Michelle Munroe spoke about improving equity and community engagement within school councils * Two breakout rooms and round table discussions – it was during these sessions that ASCAC heard from the school representatives about what is working and is not working.   **Highlights**   * Most of the school council are not using the TDSB email address provided as it was too difficult to set up and/or when it was set-up it was too difficult to use. Also, the login information may be lost when there was a change in school council members. Very few members have access to School Messenger or their Zoom accounts. This is something that ASCAC will let bring to the attention of Michelle Munroe and TDSB staff as this is an ongoing issue. For example, the event request from ASCAC was not received by most of the schools. ASCAC had to manually hunt down and try to connect with the school community on its own to try and inform them of the event. School council members confirmed they are also not receiving TDSB emails when sent to their TDSB email account. This is a big issue with communications. * Being small by design, may result in parent/guardian and staff burnout because there is a lot being asked of them, especially with school pedagogies that rely on high-levels of parent/guardian volunteer engagement with field trips, school council requests, or volunteering in the classrooms. * School councils and communities are often not aware of the free funding available to them and have not been using the funds allocated to them in the school budget line GL45100. School councils are given $500 plus a per student amount annually. They lose these funds if they are not used by the end of the school year. Principals and school staff should be making sure that their school councils are aware these funds exist and should be used. * There are a few elementary alternative schools that have low enrolment and are struggling to increase enrolment. Some have enrolment challenges across the school while others are grade specific. ASCAC will investigate and see if they can help them with increasing enrolment to fill the gaps. * Transitioning to grade 9 – grade 7 and 8 students do not have the support and resources within the TDSB to really know what is available to them and to be able to make the right choice for their individual needs. Open houses are generally held only once in January and February – right before the students need to make their decision. It was requested that there is more than one open house per year. Ideally one open house in the fall and another in January/February closer to the application deadline.     **Secondary Alternative Student Council Share & Learn Zoom Workshop**   * The ASCAC Community Building Sub-Committee is planning to do the same type of workshop as the elementary one; however, for the secondary alternative student council representatives. They are hoping to host the workshop before the April 25 ASCAC meeting so they can report back to ASCAC.     **Middle School Fun Day**   * Due to the pandemic, ASCAC moved this event from Winter 2022 to Spring 2022 - prior to the April 25 ASCAC meeting so they may report back to ASCAC. |  |
| **TDSB Board-Wide Updates** | Trustee Laskin wanted to let ASCAC know that when the Community Advisory Group’s report went to the Board, the section that referred to voting members was referred back to staff because the recommendation in the report indicated that students could not be voting members. A few Trustees made the case that students are important voting members of certain CACs. Student members are now able to vote. |  |
| **Open Floor** | Any meeting attendee could bring forth any matter they wished to discuss with ASCAC. Participants were welcomed to ask questions, provide feedback and or let the Committee know of any concerns they may have.  A group of parents from the City View Alternative Middle School spoke about a few issues.  The minimum number of teachers required for middle and secondary alternative schools is similar with 2.5 allocations. Parents from different middle schools had conversations and the consensus was that TDSB schools can’t operate and provide viable programming with less than 3.0 teachers.  The parents also raised that they had a concern with ASCAC. If ASCAC really represented all TDSB alternative schools, then why when ASCAC was requesting more staff for secondary alternative schools last spring, did it not do the same for middle alternative schools. It sounds like students don’t need the middle alternative schools as much as the secondary schools. There are middle alternative school students who also have IEP’s and who are high-risk, just like the secondary alternative school students.   Small groups of middle alternative school parents and students are now being forced to spend time and resources on their own to fight the Board to get the support and resources their schools so desperately need. They demanded ASCAC provide the same support and representation to them that its been giving secondary alternative schools.   One City View parent also mentioned that she and others were not aware of ASCAC until only recently.  A second parent agreed to what the previous parent said. She was also concerned about the 0.17 special education resources available at City View. She provided an example that 10 students with an IEP would only get 6 minutes with the special education staff per week which is unacceptable.  The support the students need when they transition from grade 8 to high school is also completely diminished. As a mother of a BIPOC child, one parent explained that there’s no room for the 2.5 staff to provide extra support and the clubs the students. The two years in middle school are critical. These students deserve and need these supports. The students know what they are missing. They see how the teachers are burning out. With 2.5 staff the schools cannot be the unique places that they are supposed to be.  When there is talk about community outreach and describing what these alternative schools are it misrepresents what these schools can be. They are losing all the amazing innovations that are happening in these alternative middle schools. A few years back, students from City View worked on a project was instrumental in having consent added to sex education across the TDSB – therefore this is the reason why her child is at this school. Could the same initiative happen today without the same staff allocations and resources? The parents and students want the bare minimum – 3.0 staff. How do they get support from ASCAC? How do they get support advocating? How do they get support to submit a recommendation?  A third parent reiterated that this situation has been happening for the last several years. Students and parents are putting in a lot of energy trying to find ways to advocate on these issues instead of spending their energy on the mission of the school which is making the world a better place. The social justice mission can’t be achieved at City View when students and parents are spending many hours trying to advocate for more staff. Some families don’t have the capacity, they are not in a position of privilege to have that capacity for advocacy. The schools cannot offer viable programs with 2.5 staff and 0.17 special education resources. There are long wait lists for these schools, so it doesn’t make sense to cap enrolment and have low staff allocations.  These schools are supposed to be safe schools. With the continuing cuts they are no longer a safe place for the students, nor the teachers. The system that guides our education is being violated and the young people are paying the price in unfortunate ways. It is very unfair that they need to spend many hours advocating for equitable education for the young people.  The fourth parent mentioned that a few years ago they had 4 staff for the same number of students (60) and now it’s down to 2.5 and it’s our kids who are losing out – our future generation. She also asked how ASCAC can support them in finding ways to ensure appropriate staffing for these schools.  Angela thanked the parents for letting ASCAC know about the situation at the middle alternative schools. She mentioned that she became aware of the middle school situation only just in the past few months. Most of the middle schools have 60 students, therefore 2.5 teachers is low.  Peter mentioned that elementary and middle alternative schools are staffed in accordance with the staffing models as the TDSB’s non-alternative schools. This is one of the biggest challenges that alternative schools have because all the alternative schools are small by design and the effect of going from 4 teachers to 2.5 is felt more. This continues to be the model because this is how the Board is funded – funding is based on the number of students in the school and projected enrolment. TDSB staff are now trying to look at the waitlists. The challenge is that TDSB can’t come up with projected enrolment based on waitlists that don’t have quantifiable data.  All the elementary schools are staffed in the same way, when you look at the 60 students in a middle school the student to teacher average 24:1 which is better than the system average (24.3 to 24.5 per teacher). The province allocates 24.5 students per teacher for funding which is the system average.  Peter mentioned that special education is a different allotment and he can speak to the System Superintendent for special education and have them review what has been mentioned in this meeting. With a 0.17 special education allotment it would require a system review of students with an IEP or must be receiving support and must be receiving adequate support.  Laurie acknowledged that it takes hours and hours of parents advocating and going to meetings accessing the right supports to bring a recommendation to a Board Committee. Even though middle schools are technically grouped with the elementary schools, the issues that middle schools are facing are more inline with the issues secondary schools are facing.  ASCAC has sub-committees and these sub-committees work on proposals, circulate the proposals, and get staff support and feedback and then the proposals are presented to ASCAC. ASCAC then votes on the proposals and then they are brought forward to the Board Committees. Laurie mentioned that she and Angela will speak to see if the middle school issue can be looked at by an existing sub-committee or whether a new sub-committee needs to be formed.  One of the City View parents thanked Laurie and mentioned that she felt that an invitation was being extended to them and they would like to work with ASCAC to figure out how to make this work. The parent also mentioned to Peter that the 2.5 staff that are allotted to the middle alternative schools don’t seem to have the same administrative support and they are not part of the bigger school community. These 2.5 don’t have a team of support (i.e., OT support) while the elementary schools do have this support. The parent suggested that this should be taken into consideration when staffing these schools. She also thanked Peter for his support about special education, but also wondered how they could follow-up with Peter to find out the outcome.  Peter mentioned that he would speak to the Superintendent to have her staff check on the situation at each school and will ask the special education staff to follow-up with the City View parents.  Another parent mentioned that regardless of how the schools are funded, it is not equitable given the unique circumstances in middle alternative schools. It must not have been done this way previously because they had 4 teachers for 60 students in the past. At some point, the formula changed and now they have 2.5 teachers for 60 students.   Another issue is no one has acknowledged who made the decision to cap student enrolment at 60 students for middle alternative schools, especially when there is space for more students. By capping at 60 students it affects these schools' staffing allocations. They can’t get more teachers. This issue has not been acknowledged or addressed.  She thanked Peter for looking into the special education issue and let Peter know that staff are aware of this because she has filed a complaint with TDSB’s Human Rights, emailed her Trustee, other Trustees, and her Superintendent. She hasn’t received feedback. Her child is not getting any special education. In fact, 3 out of the 4 middle alternative school students are not getting any special education. This is not new news for TDSB staff because she started writing letters three years ago. It is a Human Rights violation. Some of the parents who are raising these special education issues, their children didn’t receive special education assistance the two years they were in middle alternative schools. They are fighting for the future students. Some students are being told not to register at these schools because there are no special education resources.  Angela mentioned to this parent that ASCAC last month brought to PSSC a recommendation regarding the elementary total enrolment allocation. It was recommended that TDSB staff report back to ASCAC at the April 25 meeting about how they can use available space to maximize student enrolment. If additional students could be taken in, it could mean additional staff could be allocated to those schools. It all comes down to working the numbers.  Another parent mentioned that she was at the December 13 meeting when the Elementary Alternative Schools Enrolment Allocation recommendation was presented. If there is additional space and we could enrol more students to get additional resources, why isn’t the Board doing this. At the larger schools the cuts aren’t felt like they are at the smaller alternative schools because the larger schools have additional staff who could assist. This lack of resources is impacting the student’s learning.  Peter wanted to acknowledge that the dynamics that happen within a school building is different for every school. He also acknowledged that City View is in another school and hopes that the Principal of the elementary school will offer some combined opportunities for the City View students. Most of the elementary alternative schools are in a shared building. There will be some sites that have Administrators who are more active in bringing the two schools together for support and student opportunities.  Angela mentioned that her children’s school, Equinox, the administrators are very active in having both schools (alternative and non-alternative) work together on school projects, extra curricular, etc. Also, both school councils actively work together to extend community networking and building.  Trustee Laskin mentioned that the parents are right. Historically, when the Board was short millions of dollars (around 2018), it was then that the same formula was used for staffing allocation for all schools (i.e., elementary, middle, and secondary alternative schools). Trustee Laskin also mentioned that staffing for 2022-23 will be going to the Board in about a month’s time.  Unfortunately, there won’t be a formal recommendation coming from ASCAC for the middle alternative schools at the upcoming PSSC Feb. 23rd meeting because it is too late. Parents/guardians, students, and staff can still depute to the PSSC and FBEC. If middle alternative schools don’t present their issues this month, then they will have missed the opportunity for the staffing allocation for the 2022-23 school year.  ASCAC did agree to include the middle alternative schools staffing concerns in their formal meeting notes. That way ASCAC may raise these concerns to the PSSC on Feb. 23rd without the formal recommendation. | Anna to add this information to Section B of the CAC report. |
| **Closing Remarks & Adjournment** | Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm |  |
| **Next Meeting** | April 25, 2022 from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm |  |



**APPENDIX A**

