

**Name of Committee: Early Years Community Advisory Committee (EYCAC)**

**Meeting Date: March 25, 2022**

**Notes:**

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**Attendance: via Zoom:**

Pam McArthur (Community Co-Chair/ Runnymede Adventure Club), Jill Oakes (Community Co-Chair/ YMCA Child Care), Patricia Chorney Rubin (George Brown College), Anabela Ferreira (Woodgreen Child Care), Shiromie Ganesh (Heart Beatz Childcare), Stephanie Nickle (Woodgreen Child Care), Kim Rogers (Sunshine Child Care), Ann Marie Schiraldi (Toronto Children's Services), Nicola Maguire (LEF), Irena Setnik (Silver Creek Pre-School), and Patrina Stathopoulos (Dandyliion Daycare).

Also present were: Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin (Ward 11), Trustee Michelle Aarts (Ward 16), Trustee Manna Wong (Co-Chair, Ward 20), Cynthia Grundmann (Senior Policy Advisor/Manager Early Years and Child Care Services), Lynne LeBlanc (FSLCAC Parent Co-Chair), and Nadejda Lekosky (Child Care Services Manager-Interim).

**Regrets:**

Nancy Hendy (Toronto Children's Services), Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini (Executive Superintendent Learning Centre 3), and Jacqueline Spence (System Superintendent, Equity and Early Years).

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ITEM	DISCUSSION	RECOMMENDATION/ MOTION
Welcome/Introductions/ Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands		
Call to Order / Quorum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quorum confirmed.</li> </ul>	
Approval of Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agenda was approved.</li> <li>• Moved: Patrina Stathopoulos</li> <li>• Seconded: Nicola Maguire</li> </ul>	
Approval of Minutes- January 14, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minutes were approved.</li> <li>• Moved: Patricia Chorney Rubin</li> <li>• Seconded: Patrina Stathopoulos</li> </ul>	
Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed - No Conflicts were declared</li> </ul>	
Co-Chair Report	<p><b>Communication items (Co-Chairs'-Jill Oakes and Pam McArthur):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child care operators are continuing to review new mandates and guidelines from the Ministry.</li> <li>• What does the federal government Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) plan mean to child care operators? Who is going to deliver the plan? Who will be filling those jobs?</li> <li>• Child care centres should be taking placement students from any college so pre-service ECEs can get the practice</li> </ul>	

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	<p>and training they require and to support the current and anticipated workforce crisis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member shared that there is a barrier for pre-service ECEs getting into the workforce and placement expectations due to many centres suspending student placements during the pandemic. Ministry of Education has rolled back requirements for staff and students to be COVID-19 vaccinated. Agencies however are permitted to have additional requirements in place. Some Colleges will likely be requiring all staff to be COVID-19 vaccinated to their existing vaccine policy. For an ECE student to have placement they will be required to be vaccinated. If an agency cannot place the student due to being unvaccinated, then the student will not be placed and will not graduate. Placement hours have been significantly reduced due to COVID-19 and students are graduating with less hours than previous years. We understand the Ministry of Education will be providing funds to municipalities in the areas of workforce development/ recruitment and professional learning for educators to support workforce recruitment and retention.</li> <li>• Pam has formally announced that she will be stepping down as co-chair for EYCAC at the end of this term. She expressed that she has truly enjoyed her time with EYCAC and working with her fellow co-chair Jill Oakes.</li> <li>• If anyone is interested in expressing an interest in becoming a co-chair for EYCAC, please connect with Jill or Pam.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jill shared that being a co-chair is a rewarding experience. The co-chair role represents EYCAC members and provides a voice within TDSB.</li> <li>• Guest Trustee Michelle Aarts asked if there is a Specialist High School Major for students who may be interested in ECE?</li> <li>• A member shared that there are post-secondary career fairs for high school students.</li> <li>• Patricia shared that due to COVID-19 student enrollment applications for the ECE program have dropped due to the pandemic and working conditions.</li> <li>• Trustee Aarts shared that she works with a team for the Ontario School Board Association and will take back information that was shared by members concerning gaps in educational opportunities for secondary students and for students to get experience in the field. It is important to provide broader course offerings in the apprenticeship programs or Specialist High School Major programs.</li> </ul>	
TDSB Staff Updates	<p><b>Cynthia Grundmann, Senior Policy Advisor/Manager Early Years and Child Care Services and Nadejda Lekosky, Interim Manager, Child Care Services</b> shared the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nadejda shared that at this time of year and over the summer months there are large and small scale</li> </ul>	

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	<p>construction/renovation projects taking place in schools that may impact child care programs, requiring their relocation to another building or within the school. The Child Care Services team is currently working with those programs that will be impacted this summer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of Before-and After-School Programs (BASP) expansion, the last two years have been challenging for the sector. The Child Care Services team values your ongoing commitment and resilience. For those child care operators that will be expanding their BASP program next year, please connect with the school principal to begin the conversation. If operators need support, please reach out to Early Years Coordinator's Leslie Murray and Karen Guthrie. The space request process and the first stage of the lease amendment needs to be completed by June 3rd, 2022. Any new or changed spaces, must be reflected on the lease to have in place for September 2022. Cynthia shared that the Child Care Services team has had various conversations with child care partners around the impact of the pandemic and the effect on programs, enrolment, and viability. There is no pressure or expectations for expansion on operators at this time. Child Care Services is supporting the internal process for those who have expressed an interest in expanding. Cynthia expressed sincere appreciation for the continued service and delivery in BASP and infant, toddler and preschool programs and reiterated the importance of these programs for families especially during the pandemic.</li> <li>• A member asked if there was more information about TDSB requesting additional staffing of ECEs in</li> </ul>	

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	<p>kindergarten? Is it correct to say that most kindergarten classes have a teacher and ECE?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of FDK classrooms have an OCT and a DECE. However, if the class has less than 15 students enrolled there would only be an OCT. Projected FDK enrollment numbers are currently lower than pre-pandemic numbers. Staff allocations will be determined for the 2022-2023 school year in the coming weeks. Currently, there is no data on the number of students who are enrolled in virtual learning for 2022-2023.</li> <li>• There are concerns about pandemic recovery and the gaps that have been created by the pandemic. Some areas of concern deal with early literacy, early learning, lack of socialization, school closures, and the challenges of online learning, especially in early years. The importance of early learning and DECEs are integral to a kindergarten classroom. A strong pandemic recovery is needed.</li> <li>• Cynthia shared an update regarding the draft P013 Out-of-Area Admissions Policy (formerly Optional Attendance Policy). For almost two years there were opportunities for CACs to provide feedback on this policy review. The draft policy will be going to Governance and Policy Committee on April 27th, 2022.</li> <li>• Both Karen Guthrie, Early Years Coordinator and Cynthia Grundmann have been involved in the discussions around this policy review as it relates to early years programs in schools. Child care operators who have a BASP or preschool program have been involved with the</li> </ul>	

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	<p>implementation of this policy, often sharing the operational and planning challenges with the current policy in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft P.013 Out-of-Area Admissions Policy (has guiding principles of continuity, both in terms of environment and relationships, as it pertains to adult child relationships and peer to peer relationships. Children from out-of-area who are enrolled in the school-based pre-school child care program prior to the end of February of the year they are to begin Junior Kindergarten, and who will be enrolled in BASP at that school, have the option of attending the school in which the child care is located. No Out-of-Area Admissions process is required.</li> <li>• If a student no longer attends the BASP, they may remain at the school until the end of the current school year so there is no disruption mid-year. They are then required to attend their designated elementary school by home address.</li> <li>• If the draft policy is approved, it will be effective September 2022. Until then, the current policy is still in place.</li> <li>• Cynthia will be speaking at the GPC meeting on April 27th, 2022, regarding the Early Years rational and will update EYCAC on any updates prior to our next meeting on May 13th, 2022. There will be further communication with child care partners on policy change and implications once approved.</li> <li>• Cynthia provided an update on TDSB Early Years staffing. Liz Hoang, Child Care Services Manager who has been on a four-over-five leave will be returning in September.</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Cynthia's last EYCAC meeting will be on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Effective in June, Cynthia will be going on maternity/parental leave. There will be someone else who will be supporting EYCAC during her absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update was provided by Cynthia on EYCAC Terms of Reference (TOR). At the last EYCAC meeting it was discussed to start the process of updating the TOR by gathering feedback. The last time the TOR was updated was 2016 and members agreed unanimously that the current TOR no longer reflects the system or structure of members. The members all agree that it's important that the TOR reflects and drives the work that EYCAC is committed to do and to support the Boards planning operations, program policies, and procedures as it relates to Early Years.</li> <li>• Cynthia shared a google document that was provided to members that gathered anonymous feedback on key areas/questions: Members reflected and discuss:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do/should members bring to this CAC?</li> <li>2. Do you feel current membership accurately captures the stakeholders who should be at this table? If not, who's missing? What membership structure would make sense to ensure TDSB system/geographic representation?</li> <li>3. What do you feel are the key areas of our CAC mandate?</li> <li>4. What is your organization's vision for this committee?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Chair Jill would like a working group to be established between members and TDSB staff to begin drafting the TOR.</li> <li>• Members can continue to add additional feedback on the google document.</li> <li>• Within the draft TOR there does not need to include a geographic structure in the city, but a diverse geographic representation is ideal.</li> <li>• Co-Chair Pam would like more direction from TDSB staff about representation for the membership of EYCAC and to provide more voices from child care centres.</li> <li>• Cynthia has offered to work collaboratively and prepare a draft TOR with the Child Care Services team and Co-Chairs' Pam and Jill. Once a draft is completed to provide to an EYCAC ad hoc working group to review, revise, and rebuild. This can then be shared with EYCAC members at the May meeting for a meaningful discussion and review.</li> <li>• EYCAC members were all in agreement and would appreciate this direction in order to start the process with preparing the draft TOR. For those members interested in being part of the ad hoc working group please reach out to Cynthia, Pam, Jill, Nadejda, and Claudette.</li> </ul>	

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Other Business:	<p><b>FSLAC Trustee Co-Chair Rachel Chernos Lin and Parent Co-Chair Lynne LeBlanc</b> discussed FSLAC members' questions about BASP (access and expansion for French Immersion (FI) families):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Co-Chair Lynne LeBlanc shared that at a recent meeting that took place with Trustee Co-Chair Rachel Chernos Lin, Parent Co-Chair Lynne LeBlanc, Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini (Executive Superintendent Learning Centre 3), Cynthia Grundmann, and Nadejda Lekosky to discuss parent concerns expressed at the FSLAC September 14, 2021, meeting. Parents of FI students expressed the following challenges and accessibility issues of not being able to access BASP at their home school: child care programs in FI schools are sometimes too far from home; long waiting lists; escorts not provided to get students from the bus and into a BASP classroom. Parents would like the needs of child care concerns and barriers for FI students to be addressed by TDSB</li> <li>• FSLCAC would like to work with other CACs as it seems that other CACs are also in agreement of challenges with access to and expansion of BASP across TDSB not specifically FI. FSLCAC would like to work with other CACs to bring creative ideas and partnerships to start addressing BASP challenges for students, families, and areas that are underserved across TDSB.</li> <li>• FSLCAC is hoping to gather insights, ideas, suggestions from EYCAC on how to best resolve the challenges across TDSB for students, whether they are in an</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Alternative School, a FI School or a Special Education Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin shared that the goal is to remove barriers to parents accessing BASP so they don't feel they cannot accept a French placement because of a BASP issue.</li> <li>• There is an equity issue as there are fewer programs in some areas than in other parts of the city. In those areas we have students who are bused for long distances because there is not much French programming and TDSB needs to make it easier for parents to accept FI placements closer to home.</li> <li>• Co-Chair Pam shared that at today's meeting it was discussed that the whole sector is in a current staffing crisis with not being able to fill spaces. Regarding managing students from getting from an FI school to BASP there are no extra staff to manage this part. As a member stated earlier, colleges and universities are hoping that students will register for the ECE program this fall so that capacity can be built back within child care centres and eventual expansion realized.</li> <li>• Cynthia shared that an annual survey is conducted at schools that don't have a program to help serve families before and after-school. If there's enough interest to begin that registration process, the team supports this process.</li> <li>• It was previously shared by FSLCAC members that there is a preference for families who were bussed out of their home community area to be able to attend a BASP that is</li> </ul>	

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	<p>closer to their home school by address rather than accessing a BASP in the FI school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the specific challenges are around facilitating the enrollment of students outside of the home school in these programs?</li> <li>• Co-Chair Pam stated that she will add this to the next co-chair report for the next EYCAC meeting in May to have some time to think about ideas on how to help FSLCAC parents with their challenges. It is very difficult when there is not enough staff to help with escorting student to or from the bus, and when BASP is not a universal system.</li> <li>• Co-Chair Jill stated it's a combination of the current staffing crisis and when a program is in ratio, they cannot break ratio to go and meet students on a bus to bring them to the classroom. This interrupts the program flow as well.</li> <li>• A member shared that there were difficulties and challenges with the bussing and escorting of students in a FI program. This was due to ratios, staffing shortage, and problems with busses arriving on time or not showing up.</li> <li>• If EYCAC members have any suggestions or ideas to help FSLCAC please reach out to Parent Co-Chair Lynn at <a href="mailto:Lynne.LeBlanc@rogers.com">Lynne.LeBlanc@rogers.com</a></li> <li>• Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin asked if EYCAC members could think about what the FSLCACs concerns are and to consider how communication with/through our Early Years Department and French Department to families about child care and how to access it. How can communication with new French Immersion families improve? Those who</li> </ul>	

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	<p>receive offers should connect with child care? Who is the family's contact person for child care support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member posed some general questions around this issue:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where are the current French immersion schools?</li> <li>2. In the French immersion schools which schools currently have a before and after school program? Which do not? Where are the gaps?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	
Next Meeting Date	<b>May 13, 2022</b> from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. via Zoom	
<b>Adjournment</b>	March 25, 2022 at 12:28 p.m. Moved by Pam	