



**Alternative Schools Advisory Committee
Minutes**
Location: 5050 Yonge Street, Executive Room, 5th Floor
Date: Wednesday, May 21, 2014
Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

VOTING MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Elementary Parent Co-chair: Taplin-Milberry, Amanda (Equinox Holistic Alternative School);
Secondary Teacher Co-chair: Liam Rodrigues (SEED Alternative School);
Secondary Parent Co-chair : Cooper, Stephen (ALPHA Alternative Junior School);
Secondary Student Co-chair: Braxton Wignall,

MEMBERS:

Holzman, Rebecca (High Park Alternative Junior School); Wheaton, Martha (The Grove Community School); Cichocki, Andrew (Inglenook Community School); Negi, Ravi (Inglenook Community School); Gill Worley (Community); Matharu, Pamila (SEED Alternative School); Prabhu, Prafulla (Spectrum Alternative Senior School); VanNeste, Teresa (da Vinci School); Brykczynski, Paul (Mountview Alternative Junior School); McIntosh, Bonnie (Contact Alternative School); Smit, Jason (Subway Academy II); Toye, Mitchell (Scarborough Village Public School); Pasternak, Elizabeth (da Vinci School); Leung, Peyton (da Vinci School); Thornley-Hall, Gillian (da Vinci School); Omar, Kowthar (East Alternative School of Toronto); Katsoras, Kristina (The Grove Community School); Lightbody, Trevor (The Grove Community School); Kelly Dyment (Inglenook CS); Ryan Nurse (Inglenook)

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Fawthrop, Grant (TDSB-Principal, Alt. Second School-West); Gardner, Manon (TDSB - Superintendent); McCann, Gerry (TDSB – Vice Principal, Second Alt. School); White, Nancy (TDSB - Principal, Alt. Second Sch -East/Year Round Schools);

REGRETS:

Bolton, Chris (Trustee Co-chair); Martin Long (Elementary Teachers Association); LeFort, Jean-Guy (Elementary Teacher Co-Chair, Downtown Alternative School);

GUESTS:

RECORDER: Manalo, John (Parent and Community Engagement)

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/ Recommendation
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1-Welcome and Introductions	Meeting was called to order by Steve Cooper at 7:05 p.m. All members were welcomed by the co-chairs.	
2-Approval of Quorum (11)	Quorum was approved by consensus at 7:06 p.m. Voting will be 1 vote per school and by consensus.	
3-Approval of Agenda of March 26, 2014 And Minutes January 29, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The agenda was approved as amended. Moved by Amanda Taplin Milberry. Seconded by Kowther, all in favour Motion carried. ▪ A motion to approve the draft minutes of March 26, 2104 was made first by Amanda TM and second by Rebecca H. The draft minutes of March 26 were approved as amended. 	
4-Trustee's Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ none 	Be continued at next meeting
5-Superintendent's update	<p>(Manon Gardner)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EQAO: Met with Director Quan and Beth Butcher on the topic of EQAO within the Alternative schools system to address the concern if the parents/students do not want to write the EQAO test and what is the result of not writing the test. The Ministry of Education expects that all students write the test, otherwise the TDSB decides on the alternative solution and there could be consistency among alternative schools with principals/superintendents/administrators. The procedures need to be written and implemented. A student who does not write the EQAO test will not receive a mark of zero and will not be reported to the Ministry. A class or school should not be penalized when students are not writing. Bring feedback to Manon Gardner and superintendents if there penalization for not writing the test. <p><u>Feedback:</u></p> <p>Q: Sometimes principals and superintendents are new in alt schools, so how will they know of this? A: Manon can attend some superintendent meetings and report on this topic. Q: Some individuals are penalized when students do not write. A: If there are any complaints on procedures, contact Manon Gardner so that she can contact the superintendent of the school.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Beasties: The best way to support the website is to apply for a PRO grant and a parent needs to apply for it \$500-\$5000. The deadline is being extended. The application can be prepared for the next year. ▪ Professional Development for newly appointed VP/P in summer time: Follow-up will Rita Simmons and she will add to the workshop offering as long as the names of instructors to provide PD sessions (2-hours). Every year there are 100 new VP/P and the sessions. Manon G. will bring forward to the Leadership Academy to organize alt school PD sessions for newly appointed VP/P assigned to alt. schools, and extend the PD session to the other VP/P. Feedback: Q: Will existing VP/P be provided training? A: Yes, and eventually superintendents can be offered the training. Q: Can students provide that training? A: Yes, various perspectives can be provided. We can make a list of the instructors to provide to Rita Simmons. Working Group on PD sessions was established to plan the list of instructors; Members: Rebecca H, Kowthar O, Date: August 20-21 is the next PD orientation for new VP/P ▪ Optional Attendance Policy committee is meeting next fall. 	
6-Election of ASAC co-chairs for 2014-15	<p>Co-chairs Jean-Guy Lefort, Steve cooper, Braxton Wignall and Amanda Taplin-Milberry are stepping down this June. Co-chairs are elected every year in a staggered way to transfer the experience from year to year.</p> <p>Members who stepped forward (below) will be contacted by Liam Rodrigues.</p> <p>Elementary teacher co-chair: Kowthar Omar Secondary teacher co-chair: Liam R. Elementary parent co-chair: Adam Faux Secondary parent co-chair: Kelly Dyment Secondary student co-chair: Ryan Nurse/Braxton Wignell (alternative)</p>	
7-BrainFood Conference	<p>(Braxton Wignall) The conference on May 5, 2014 was successful and the attendance was a majority of alternative students. Some elementary students were presenting the workshops. An Alternative Advocacy Group was formed (Alter-Ego) to publish insights and conversations of alt education with</p>	Braxton W. will write up an invitation and call for submissions to

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	<p>other contributions through a blog and journal. This will assist to gather ideas from students and present ideas to the Ministry for future improvement to the alt school system.</p> <p>Grant mentioned that he was observing as a participant and was impressed with the conference outcomes.</p> <p>Steve C suggested the the BrainFood Conference, AlterEgo and Beasties could be combined in the PRO Grant application.</p> <p>Braxton mentioned that content is important in on-line journalism. As an optional idea to give leadership coop/course credit for the students who plan the conference.</p>	send to everyone.
8-Board support for ASAC/Beasties	See superintendent report	
9-EQAO issues	See superintendent report	
10-Pathways	<p>Co-chairs -The co-chairs sent a letter to the Ontario Ministry of Education and they are waiting to hear from the Ministry. Transitioning between programs is challenging for students considering the lack of resources. There is need for an Alternative Additional qualifications section for teachers in order to open the pathways programming and improve teacher hiring security.</p>	
11-Elementary and Secondary Updates	<p>Co-chairs</p> <p>A) Centralized Superintendents: There is a need to organize the schools according to pedagogy and curriculum. This understanding is important for VP/P and Ministry of Education. Centralized superintendents who share grade levels to stabilize program offerings: Parent/Community mentioned that Secondary Principals are dispersed across the system and the communication pieces are confusing between schools. Centralized superintendents would improve the communication for all the alternative schools (Principals at all elementary, middle and secondary alt schools). At elementary level, principals are in charge of the building. Alt schools need principals who are familiar with the alt school system and become allied with the school so the sites that share space with the regular school with the alt school can work together. Principals at alt-schools become part of the community and deeply understand the culture of that school. Manon G. mentioned that TDSB is over its benchmark of VPs and Ps as a whole system, and suggested that</p>	

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	<p>the existing or newly appointed VP/Ps could be trained through PD sessions on the alt-school system coordinated with ASAC.</p> <p>A principal suggested that it was challenging to report to two superintendents.</p> <p>Manon G. suggested to bring a superintendent to speak or present.</p> <p>B) Stakeholder participation in hiring: Meetings happened with the ASAC co-chairs, union reps and principals. And the resolution was to look at the SSON and formulate a section for teachers to fill out. One of the challenges moving forward is with the staffing numbers. Students are coming with challenges. There will be a communication piece at the elementary alt. school level to promote transitions to sec alt. school (eg. Cityview school). It is requested that the communication be sent to parent councils, administrators and the TDSB website and the electronic versions.</p> <p>C) Concerns with Admissions: An observer mentioned that in the mainstream system, there is little information about alternative schools communicated to alt schools – little representation of alt school. Grant mentioned that a brochure and film is being developed to advertise alt schools. Some schools are not able to admit students due to limited programming for those with equity challenges. There is a waiting list. The challenge is that the school has a maximum admittance per year. Schools are not allowed to fill the programs due to natural attrition. In addition, there is a current belief of “student poaching” between schools.</p> <p>It was suggested from a teacher that there is a need to admissions decisions as it arises.</p> <p>Manon G. Suggested that schools with admission concerns write a letter to principal and superintendent with the attendance concerns.</p>	***Staff Undertaking: Manon G will followup with Planning Dept. with the cap issue, ***ASAC will write a letter to principal and superintendent with the attendance concerns.
12- Secondary staffing allocations	See Item 5-superintendents update.	
New Business		

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A) Email on Parent Survey	<p>A) A letter from Hawthorne for Parent Survey Questionnaire. There is some disagreement with the values of specific alt. school and Parent desires.</p> <p>It was suggested to build charter resource website to link to an alternative community website</p> <p>Some schools want to maintain a particular culture in the alt school, and it is difficult if the student incoming are with a different interest or focus.</p>	
B) SC Chairs	<p>B) Steve C. mentioned that ASAC is trying to contact the School Council chairs, but it is challenging to get their email addresses. It was suggested that parents involved with ASAC pass on the information to the next SC chair.</p> <p>Manon G will ask the SO for the SC chairs contact information.</p>	
C) Meeting Times	<p>C) Kowthar O. suggested that ASAC meeting times begin at 6pm instead of 7pm because it will difficult for the TTC riders.</p> <p>The new co-chairs will decide for next year.</p>	
D) Fashion School	<p>D) Kathryn proposed a fashion school modeled after OASIS's skate board factory. She is doing research and is excited about creating programs for students. She would like support from ASAC.</p>	
Next Meetings	October, 2014 Formal Meeting at 5050 Yonge Street, Committee Room A, 7:00 pm	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.	

Next Meeting: October, 2014 Formal Meeting at 5050 Yonge Street, Committee Room A, 7:00 pm