

Working Group	Virtual Engagement (Parent Engagement for families in the Virtual Schools)
Date (PIAC Meeting)	May 18, 2020
Description/Objective	This ad hoc Working Group aims to provide recommendations on Parent/Family Engagement in the Virtual School. Areas of interest are Responsiveness, Communication, Community, Accountability, and relation with Home School Councils.
Update	<p>Since the last PIAC meeting (on April 20, 2021), the ad hoc Working Group met once, on May 17. Attendance: John Bakous, Chris Levien, Seema Mitchell; Kaydeen Bankasing (Co-Lead), Wilmar Kortleever (Co-Lead), D. Williams (Co-Chair). Regrets: Andrew Waters, Felicia Seto-Lau (Co-Chair) Agenda: 1. Virtual Learning in 2021/2022; 2. Volunteering in the Virtual School; 3. Parent Connect (Exchange of Contact Information between parents* in the VS); 4. Review of November PIAC Recommendations; 5. Virtual School Resources.</p> <p>During the discussions, the Working Group concluded it was important that we get a fulsome impression for Virtual School parents/families how their year has been, what parent/family engagement they appreciated and what they lacked: see motion below.</p> <p>Separately, in hearing the news that the deadline for choosing between in-person school and remote learning was postponed, the Working Group felt strongly that the TDSB should organize a live, in-person, interactive forum, like a Town Hall, before the eventual deadline to choose. Such a forum reaches different people in a different way, in addition to any written, electronic communication media like e-mail and websites. The personal aspect also shows transparency and fosters trust.</p>
Motion	<p>Whereas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the 2020/2021 School Year has been challenging for all, but especially for students and families in the Virtual Schools, and - parent & family engagement in the Virtual School was slow to get off the ground, and still falls short of the engagement provided in the brick & mortar schools, <p>PIAC Recommends that the Toronto District School Board organize a survey or other consultation to ask all parents & families in the Virtual School for their feedback on parent(/guardian/caregiver) engagement during the past school year, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general impression of the year - parent/family engagement that supported them (best practices) - parent/family engagement that was lacking (lessons/ideas to learn for next year) - parent/family engagement to implement in the 2021/2022 school year. <p>Results of this survey/consultation can be of great benefit in the 2021/2022 school year, especially given that many families are still expected to start with fully remote learning in September. That may be with a closer connection with the brick & mortar 'home school', but many of the drawbacks of virtual learning remain in terms of engagement, resources, and other.</p>

Next Steps and Action items	<p>Discuss items during our next Working Group Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November Recommendations Review – invite staff from the Virtual School. • Further discuss a proposed Recommendation to ask the TDSB to facilitate <i>Parent Connect</i> (Exchange of Contact Information between parents/guardians) for ALL parents (but especially those with students in virtual learning) by allowing parents/guardians to ‘opt in’ on exchanging contact information. • Further explore the inequities in the Virtual School Experience, including advocacy for more (equal) resource allocation. <p>PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ThoughtExchange; • Organize facilitated Conversations with parents in the Virtual School; • Develop further Virtual Engagement Recommendations, especially in the area of Accountability.
Co-lead(s)	<p>Kaydeen Banks (Rep, Ward 8) Wilmar Kortleever (Rep, Ward 11)</p>
Working Group Members <i>(Name and Email Addresses)</i>	<p>PIAC: Saira Somani (W3), Sharon Grant (W4), Patricia Seedial (W4), Jess Hungate (W5), Jaimala (W5), Mirian Turcios (W6), Kaydeen Bankasingh (W8), John Bakous (W8), Andrew Waters (W9), Cecile Farnum (W9), Charlotte Schwartz (W10), Wilmar Kortleever (W11), Nazerah Shaikh (W14), Kate Leuschen-Millar (W16), Seema Mitchell (W18), Shanti Chand (W19), Abdullah Mamun (W19), Chris Levien (W20); Zuojun Han (W20), Towhid Noman (CLG), Co-Chairs: D. Williams, Felicia Lau Community Members: Sylvester Witter, Zena Shereck TDSB: Michelle Munroe (PCEO), Latha John (PCEO, Committee assistance), Trustee Trixie Doyle (Ward 14); TDSB Guests: Vicky Branco (Parent Engagement in the Virtual School); Hugh Keane (CSW); Ian MacPherson (CSW); Ian Allison (Superintendent, VS), Shirley Chan (Superintendent, VS).</p>