

**ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL
SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMEBERS MEETING
September 10, 2019
Held at 77/99 Harbour Square, Multi Purpose Room,
77/99 Harbour Square, Toronto, Ontario
at 5:30 p.m.**

ATTENDING: Jason & Laura-Maria (LM) Co-Chairs
Jen Co-Chairs Secretary
Tendai Advocacy Chair
Ivana Communications Chair
Scott Woolford Principal

ABSENT: Abigail, Shannon

ALSO INVITED: Jane Phillips-Long, TDSB Superintendent,
Stephanie Donaldson, TDSB Trustee,
David Hawker-Budlovsky, Centrally Assigned Principal Outdoor Education
Tanya Senk, Centrally Assigned Principal of TDSB Urban Indigenous Education Centre
Elder Blue Waters

CALL TO ORDER

Proper notice having been given, and a quorum confirmed, the meeting was called to order.

Meeting called to order at 5:40pm. Land acknowledgement made by Elder Blue Waters

WELCOME

Welcome and introductions by Laura-Maria.

Thank you to all in attendance especially representatives from TDSB, Mr Giambrone, Tanya Senk and Elder Blue Waters.

DISCUSSION ON PORTABLES

Stephanie Donaldson (SD)

- Goal tonight is to make sure that we all have an understanding of what TDSB is trying to achieve in the building. Big part is the outdoor education and the other part is the indigenous education.

- Tanya is going to give us a little bit more information on the programing.

Tanya Senk

- Centrally assigned principal for the indigenous education & principal of Wandering Spirits School
- Invited to the meeting to provide context with Outdoor Ed (OE) program partnership and the importance of being out on the in the land, earth, air and water
- Partnership started approx. 7 years ago across the TDSB
- Worked closely with Elder Duke Redbird and the Urban Indigenous Education Centre to provide a programing in indigenous ways of knowing and being, eg arts based projected (advised by Duke) and Jay Belredferd. How to appropriately do art in a way that cultural appropriation is not an issue esp around woodlands.
- IPS building was built using indigenous aesthetics and principles
- Worked on medicine garden in our school's courtyard to grow 4 sacred medicines to be used in all TDSB schools.
 - o Connie: which school is maintaining? Science or IPS?
 - Worked with members of community, the Centre, OE, IPS teachers & students
 - David: both schools - initiative that was started with OE, Scott & staff were invited to participate, consult, plan
 - All of the funding came centrally thru Community Connected Experiential Learning Grant and central funds. Intention is that it's the bases of programing in the natural science school
 - Gives IPS students opportunity to be involved too
 - o Elder Blue Waters: who is responsible for upkeep?
 - David: both schools and some islanders during the summer
 - Lots of unexpected growth, removing cautiously so not to remove intended seeds
 - Camp cared for it during the summer but care not kept up
- Speaking to history and contemporary context in terms of the relationship of Urban Indigenous Edu Centre and Council of Elders moving forward to meet the needs of students in a good way
 - o Q?: what is the connection with portables and the indigenous connection?
 - o Connie: what is the connection to the physical building? Connection between 2 or 3 portables going into the building and the connection to the medicine garden?
 - Tanya: was explaining the connection with OE and Urban Education Centre and professional learning

David Hawker-Budlovsky (DHB)

- Tanya was speaking to the programing that is offered at OE
- Thank you for inviting!
- Has been centrally assigned principal for last 5 years. Was teacher in Island Natural Science School in 2003/4 – has some history with our school
- One thing would like to point out is that the Public School and Natural Science School do not exist without one another.

- One of the oldest formal Outdoor Education Centre(OE) in Ontario
- In the past, programs were intertwined where staff interwove between programs. Over time there became a distinction between the two schools.
- Public school enrollment was in decline so at that time they wanted to make sure they both can remain open
- During budget cut talks, at no time was Island OE location never considered to be removed
- 4,000 plus students attend OE over the school year
- Working with Planning Department to see how to manage the number of students/bubble that is happening at IPS. Currently in the peak of the bubble.
- Dining hall has already been converted to classrooms. Common room reconfigured for dining space. Additional space still required. Overflowed into science school rooms 1 & 2
- Portables haven't arrived due to flooding
- Portables were decided to handle the influx of students – had asked for 3, getting 2
 - o Public and OE would share responsibility, ie one each
 - o Would mean OE would only have one indoor classroom to hold the materials required to run the program and only space with plumbing to support the programs they run including indigenous art program and other programs
- LM: how often do they require classroom time? Full 5/6 hrs like IPS students?
 - o DHB: Several periods of time throughout the day that they are there
 - o LM: Emphasis on outdoor learning. How much actual time (hrs/min) are they inside?
 - o DHB: Changes with each group. Depends on time of year, program selected and weather
 - Programs run most frequently = Garden and Art program. Art is 2.5 hour time – starts inside with 20-30 min of presentation (history/context of woodland art style), 1 hr on the land to gather their inspiration for their art and then, are back and forth inside the building for another 45 min. About 1 hour 15 min. This is an example of 1 program that rotates through the day.
 - 60 students in the program at any given time. So would have 15 students going thru it at a time. Program runs 6-8 times a week. So 2 hours times 8 = 16 hours a week.
- LM: Who requested 3 portables?
 - o Steph: TDSB planning department
- Q?: is the intension to take one IPS class currently in science wing and put them in the portable? So that portable will be their permanent classroom for the rest of the school.
- Reiterate – OE is a rotating program & on avg kids in OE will get an hour indoors exposure versus the kids in IPS will get 6.5 hrs in that room. This doesn't sound very fair in terms of exposure.
 - o SD: TDSB wants to provide this OE programing for 4,000 students in TDSB from all over the city. Board is committed to working with indigenous partners and a big part of the programing in OE is the indigenous art program which is reliant on access to plumbing. Which is why we need to provide indoor space.
 - o Q?: OE kids are only there for a short time.
 - o David: some visiting kids are also in portables in their reg classroom

- Q?: strength in for IPS that we have OE. We shouldn't feel like our kids are being targeted. If we are concerned for our kids, we should be concerned about all kids in there. It's a hard sell that only IPS should be inside with access to plumbing but visiting kids are not
- Q?: so IPS kids will use portable for 6 hrs while OE kid will use for 1 hr
- Q? different kids rotating thru OE program will only be in there for 1 hr vs 6 hrs. Comparing a kid being in there for a short time to a kid there for the whole year

Scott Woolford (SW)

- We are currently using both science classrooms while waiting for the portables
- OE is using common and greenhouse
- Working with site supervisor (who is new)
- Working on times to make sure they don't want them to cancel their program when the need the water (the indigenous art program) – has happened before
- Working together to develop scheduling to find a place in the whole building for a water source
- Staff room an option. Need to find creative way to give them the space with water
- Most classrooms don't have plumbing either so need to find solution for own (IPS) art program also
- This past spring some IPS kids invited to work on the garden
- IPS benefitted from OE: sometimes IPS kids invited to do OE (last year gr 5/6 stayed), got to platinum EcoSchool b/c OE help
- Want to be able to keep the science program

Jane Phillips-Long (JPL)

- We value both IPS & OE partnership; mutually beneficial to each other.
- Portables not here yet and prob not for a while as water table still high
- Wondering if a timetable can be created to accommodate OE in staff room
- DHB: yes. Have been working with Scott.

Diana (parent, grade 1 plus one coming)

- Thank you all for coming and listening.
- We're a close community with parents and teachers.
- Harsh decisions will affect all classes. Everything matters
- We have the issue with the portables as it disconnects the class with everyone else
- Let us all/collectively help you –our elected officials– to find a solution on space w/o portables.
- What do u need us to do? Is it a financial issue? Let us help you solve the issue
- SD: are u suggesting to build more school? We lease the land from City of Toronto
- JPL: back a few years... IPS/OE jewel in our TDSB system. Looking at enrollment, thru planning studies found we have accommodation pressure. Too many kids. Not enough space. First considered, program that we can eliminate? Closed optional attendance, done. Considered dropping gr 6 but nowhere else to put grade 6s. Already stretched/full in downtown core.
 - o This was expected and the 2 new classrooms built in dining hall
 - o Decisions made between Associate Director level, OE & IPS

- o Projections indicate for this & next year we will still need the 2 science classes then enrollment is projected to drop and we will only need 1
- o Met w City & planning, SW & JPL & others to ask for portables. Space leased from City, in agreement stated we may not expand the school. We won't get permission for that
- o And, even if we had \$ we could not do it without administrative permission
- o Elder Blue Waters: IPS on unseeded territory. Bring in Credit First Nation, this their territory, area can be reclaimed
- o Permission granted for portables
- o Can't keep a class in the library so must use science classrooms
- o Question to OE is how can we share the space and OE programs can continue?
- Q?: can we fight the City & the lease?
- DHB: dealing with a 2 year window. Fighting the city/building won't address immediate issue
 - o Elder Blue Waters: why do we need to expand school when we can have OE use another mechanism of building like a longhouse/tipi/yurt? Why put indigenous kids back into portables and go back to Colonization.

Ruth (gr 6 & 4)

- Thank you for the natural science because IPS kids get to go to OE when there's a cancelation
- Only reason we have hot lunch school
- Concerned that that a kid coming to use the bathroom a coyote is going to take them & run off
- Can we not use it as a homeroom class & consider putting the library there or something that doesn't require plumbing. Or music or French?
- JPL: All the programs in the school are already on a cart. There's nothing else to move
- We're already constrained by the ferry
 - o LM: that's an item we discussed last year
- Can we put plumbing into a portable?
- How far do they need to go to get to the building?
 - o SW: IPS portable will be on south side of school. About 10 feet from the door
 - o Likely for a junior class

Heather (gr 5 & 2)

- School sits next to radio towers, have u considered the exposure of the kids in the portable
 - o SW: when building was built it was built with metal cage to protect the kids from the waves. One family expressed concerns so someone from Health and Safety came to do a Radio Wave Test. Result=low to none. South end of school nothing. Even the caretakers room didn't have anything. Highest was in SW's office. Report is now 4 yrs but old debunked the Radio Wave concern. Reason why IPS portable going on south end. Not sure if it will have metal lining either.
- Ppl are moving here to goto the school so why would u say it won't continue(only short term). Families are staying and not moving away
 - o JPL: Should be leveling not growing student population

Cheryl (gr 5 son is in one of the OE classrooms)

- How will this impact the field? The class? Day to day logistics? Timing (outdoor clothes on/off for bathroom)? How much will this interrupt class time and flow of class. What if the teacher needs to leave the classroom? Will there be a buddy system?
- JPL: over 400 portables in our system. They will have PA and electricity. Will be connected to school. Will have walkie-talkies.
- Scott: Access to school doors will have swipe card. Buddy system (as with inside the school). All safety routines will still be in place.

Connie

- There's space in the school for all our children (as current).
- Recognize the art program & medicine garden program
- If managing this now why can't the current schedule continue on so portable not needed
- Question if a portapack has been considered as it would be physically attached to the building so they would only go thru door and not need to put on outdoor clothing
- Children in Ontario have a right to a safe and inclusive community.
- You're taking one class and pushing them out
- Kids are only there for 2.5 days whereas IPS kids are there for 10 months.
- IEP needs to have access to wifi connection – connection is essential/legally entitled to
- Will the chromebook/ipad cart be brought into the portable? Smartboard?
- Helped raise \$50-60K to purchase all these electronics for the school
- OE is a privilege but 10 mth of education is a right
- JPL: decision made that we each take a portable. Didn't want to go back to library classroom.
 - o DHB: the (art) programs are not running
 - o Can we figure out a timetable where you can stay in the classroom & cohabitate
- DHB: SW, DHB & OE staff have been working on timetabling. Most of OE supplies are in storage spaces which can only be accessed thru the classroom. Trying to be respectful of teacher and students in that room.
 - o OE will absolutely continue to support IPS regardless.
- Q?: are portables truly the best option? Can it be something different.
- TDSB doesn't have portapacks. Attached to the building even by an outdoor door.
 - o JPL: will take that idea back to Planning
- Connie: School council paid for the wifi connection upgrades. Will there be wifi in portables
- DHB: Will be hard wired internet in portables. Will have hubs to allow for wifi (from wire)
- SW: Purchased more chromebooks to have a stationary the cart in the portable
 - o Not supporting smartboard tech. Using data projector instead (lady bug)
 - o Data projector and cart in the classroom. The teaching piece will not change.

Alex

- Why are kids who will be there for 10 months suggested to be in the portable and not the ones who will be there for a limited amount of time. What is the logic behind that?
 - o SD: about sharing the space so IPS would have one and OE have the other. OE is programming that TDSB wants to offer to 4000 kids
 - o Only for a short time solution to an enrollment bubble – 2 years
- Connie: TDSB says short term in planning perspective. Not short term
- DHB: no-one likes portables. They will be shared. Over the last 3 years the school has continued to expand and the science school has lost their main space and dining hall. Have been and continue to support IPS in the growth but there are needs for the OE programming too.

Jason (gr 4 & 1)

- Summary – what is the mandated number of hours for junior? 300 min a day
- Curriculum will be negatively impacted for OE if they do not have the plumbing
- Read email from Ali & Saima (please see Appendix A)
- How will portables work with our environment? What if it floods again? Different evacuation?
 - o JPL: engineers working on it. Can get responses
 - o SW: hurricane proof

Frida (SK and one coming)

- Could we not move your things into the portable
- Had plumbing and toilets in a portable in Sweden how come they can't do that here
- DHB: had also questioned why we can't get portables with plumbing.
 - o Storage is an issues on both sides. Not enough space for OE materials.
 - Boots, outdoor clothes, science kits... space limitations
 - Health and Safety has had concerns. Have already considered storage in the back to the building
 - Why can't it go into a shed? City doesn't allow.

Ivana (SK)

- This wasn't a fair way of splitting the space. How did you come to decision that it was fair.
- Our children's basic education is right to have
- DHB: IPS is tight passionate community that speaks for their school
 - o Want to keep integrity of OE program while accommodating IPS' growth
 - o Have been working on finding a solution over last 4 years
 - o Want to maintain the positive experience. Amazing that the only time some inner city kids that come, this is their only exposure to the island/nature/park space

Scot M

- Working on this for 4 year but why are we only hearing about it now
- Planning bubble probably not accurate. Ppl are still moving into the neighbourhood

- Currently 2 IPS classes in 2 science rooms. Getting 2 portables. One per school.
- DBH: Of those 2 classes 1 will go to portable, 1 will stay in science room

Tempie

- Comment – sacrifices on both sides. 2 IPS classes have no windows
- Will the portables be permanent or temporary?
- SD: portables are moveable but will stay on property until they are needed somewhere else
- Comment – has seen unused portables stay on a school's property empty for a long time
- David: City does not agree to have portables as a long term solution. Short term only

Tendai

- In support of the bigger picture. Our children are lucky to be on island. Exists with OE
- Understands that OE has been accommodating and not able to maintain their level of integrity.
- We all need to be accommodating. We can't blame OE

Connie

- David we do not want you to feel that we don't appreciate you
- OE is an incredible learning experience
- Science school has saved IPS when we had no population
- We understand that you too are a parent and as a parent, we just want to protect our children

Parent

- Can we find a solution with scheduling?
- If we can manage this for 1-2 years maybe we don't need the portables
- When is this coming?
- Can we use the old Island School (Artscape)
 - o SD: not sure. Will look into it
 - o SD: will look into portapacks. Has looked into plumbing in portables.

Diane (SK & one coming)

- We (attendees) came thinking that this is not a closed situation. Or, is this meeting just to appease us or will what we said will be taking into consideration?

JPL

- We will consider everything
- SW has been a great partner with ferry, City, boat, OE etc
- Asking of DBH and SW to work something out in terms of scheduling. Consider the staff room

Connie

- Decision that a Junior class (inferred) going in a portable & one OE class in other been made?

- SD & JPL were not informed of the decision
- Parents want to complain to the decision maker – who is it?
 - o SD: Manon Gardner, Associate Director, School Operations and Service Excellence
 - o Made progress about seeing what options are
 - o Recommend – try to continue to work together. Hold off on the letter writing
- JPL: want to work cooperatively together so everyone stays inside. Will take feedback to the associate director

Parent

- Thank you to all for being here, esp DBH
- Understand that DBH wants/needs to protect his space
- Portable delay has been a good thing because it forced this conversation
- If we can make it work now without the portable, can't we just continue for a little longer?
- JPL: \$80K each portable

Parent

- Documented health and safety issues surrounding portables
- What measures will you put in place to ensure these health issues don't happen
- JPL: All portables inspected annually. Not old buildings. They are repaired, insulated, air quality inspected. Done yearly

Parent

- What happens if something happens and they can't access school
- Students would be moved to a relocation site

Parent (outdoor educator for 25 yrs)

- Understand the importance of learning outside
- The learning is *outside*.
- Visiting kids will not know that they have been displaced. They are there for *outdoor*
- School should stay in school and the OE should be more focused on the outside

Parent

- Won't they lose instruction time due to "transfers"?
- SW: given 5 min entry time before instructional time

Winnie (JK)

- Does that mean as soon as the portable arrives the class will be relocated immediately?
- JPL: can't answer. Will find out from associate director
- Steph: there would be announcements made

Parent

- How long will it be to setup?
- JPL: will need to create foundation, steps, hookups need to be done. Not a quick thing
- In reality only 1.5 yrs not even 2 that the portables will be used

Parent

- We are telling students halfway thru year hey you need to move
- Can we consider this next year instead of asap? Will disrupt their learning with the move.
- SD: will bring that back to decision maker

Parent

- Want school council involvement in the meeting?
 - o JPL & SD: no.

Parent

- What can we do as a school/community to help you out that we can do? DBH?
- Maybe something that you can consider? What can we give to you?
- DBH: OE would ask that you please continue offer your voice to support our program. Managed to only close 1 location. Island OE has had staffing cut
- Please let us know when/where/how so we can support you.
- Thank you for your concessions!

SD: Thank you for sharing your info and coming out.

Jason

- Thank you all for coming
- Remind AGM & looking for new members
- Remind Annual BBQ

NEXT MEETING

School Council AGM coming up! Stay tuned!

TERMINATION OF MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Co-Chair Secretary

Date

Co-Chair Secretary

Date

APPENDIX A – E-Mail from Parents

On Tue, Sep 10, 2019 at 9:32 AM Ali wrote:

From: Ali
To: Scott Woolford <Scott.Woolford@tdsb.on.ca>,
Island Public School Council <updates@ipsschoolcouncil.com>
CC: Saima
Date: Sep 10, 2019, 9:32 AM
Subject: Re: IPS School Council September 2019

Good morning Scott and everyone else.

We would like to attend this evening's meeting but at this point seems challenging. Regardless, would like submit our statement for your record.

Summary statement: We are totally against moving our IPS children to an outdoor portable facility.

Detailed statement: We live in Harbourfront for one primary reason. So that our children can attend Island Public School. We love the school, the principal and the staff. However as you are all aware, our children have to bear a lot more than other TDSB children in terms of safety, commuting, flooding and all kinds of natural events to be able to benefit from the IPS experience. It is all worth it. But any further disruption, no matter how minor, especially driven by other external factors (such as budget cuts, outdoor education needs, growing student body etc.) will exacerbate an already challenged and disrupted school environment. I totally understand that OE needs a solution for their own needs - but it should not be at the expense of our children's safety, focus and time. We are already living these days in an environment of uncertainty because of the Ontario government's education cuts and curriculum changes. PLEASE we request you to find an alternate solution for OE, so that we do not subject our IPS children to a further loss in the quality of their life and their education.

Many thanks and regards.

Ali and Saima
(parent of K)