

ETOBICOKE CENTRE SCHOOLS

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THIS IS THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ETOBICOKE CENTRE SCHOOLS ADVISORY COMMITTEE. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT STEPHEN THIELE AT 416-559-3424

QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION NOW!

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MEDIA REPORTS: AUDITS BURIED

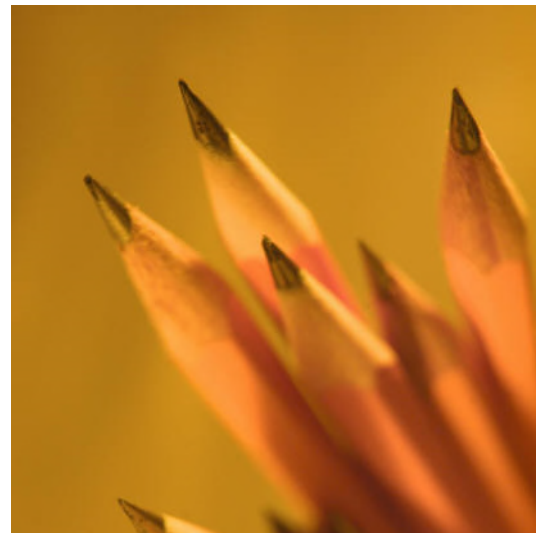
WE DEMAND THAT AUDITS BE MADE PUBLIC

The Toronto District School Board is the largest school board in Canada. With an annual budget of nearly \$3 billion, the public and over 250,000 children enrolled therein has a right to expect that the TDSB is operated in a manner that is transparent and accountable.

However, a recent article published by the Globe and Mail reveals that yet another audit has been hidden from the eyes

More inside!

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NEW CHAIR

On December 1, 2014, the Toronto District School Board elected Shaun Chen as its new chair. Mr. Chen replaces former Chair Mari Rutka who was not re-elected in the 2014 municipal election. Mr. Chen defeated Etobicoke Centre trustee, Chris Glover.

CHILDREN BEING USED AS POLITICAL PAWNS

It is arguably difficult for the trustees of the TDSB to function in the best interests of our children or their parents when almost half of the Board is comprised of union-backed candidates. The union-backed trustees lack independence and are subject to the wishes of their special interest group supporters.

During the 2014 municipal election campaign it was reported that the teachers union donated \$750 to each of their union-backed candidates.

Arguably worse, it was also reported by Christine Blizzard in the Toronto Sun that teachers were paid to canvass for union-backed candidates. According to Blizzard, teachers who canvassed for two three-hour shifts were entitled to a day off teaching.

The OSSTF confirmed that teachers were being given paid “time release” for the union-backed list of school trustees. This is permitted under the *Municipal Election Act* and union contracts that permit teachers to take time out of the classroom for “union business”.

While unions serve a valuable purpose, during an election our children should not be used as pawns.



UNION BACKED TRUSTEES

Chris Glover (Ward 2)

Howard Kaplan (Ward 5)

Robin Pilkey (Ward 7)

Jennifer Arp (Ward 8)

Ausma Malik (Ward 10)

Alexander Brown (Ward 12)

Parthi Kandaval (Ward 18)

David Smith (Ward 19)

Manna Wong (Ward 20)

Shaun Chen (Ward 21)



Calendar of Events

Etobicoke Centre dates of interest:

- **Wednesday, December 10, 2014, Parent Involvement Advisory Council meeting, 5050 Yonge Street, 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm.**
- **Ward Forum, Monday, January 12, 2015, Eatonville Jr. School, 15 Rosburn Dr. 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, hosted by Trustee Glover.**



HISTORY OF BURIED AUDITS

The Deloitte & Touche LLP forensic audit of the Focus on Youth program is not the only recent audit which has yet to be made public.

1. In December 2013, the Ontario provincial government commissioned an audit of the TDSB. While a report is publicly available, details of the audit have not been shared with the TDSB or the public.

2. In the spring of 2014, the TDSB conducted an internal audit of trustee expenses. It was only the result of Freedom of Information requests that some details of this report have been made public.

AUDITS OUGHT TO BE RELEASED

of the public.

According to the article, in or around 2012, Deloitte & Touche LLP was asked to conduct a forensic audit of a program called Focus on Youth, which receives \$3 million in annual funding. The audit was requested because an anonymous letter sent to the TDSB raised allegations of “misappropriation” of charitable community funds.

While the audit was completed in

Audit never made public

September 2012, senior TDSB staff refused to provide it to the Board’s audit committee. The article also states that another TDSB employee wanted to suppress the audit report on the grounds, according to the employee’s lawyer, that release could harm his client’s reputation.

Although a personal reputation is worthy of protection, the public has a right to know whether any of the allegations have merit and if so that appropriate steps be taken against any wrongdoers.

Transparency and accountability demand that this report be made public now.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Our public education system serves a valuable purpose. However, parents and residents are often not engaged enough in our schools or able to keep up with the issues.

ESAC's mandate is to keep people informed of critical issues at the TDSB and to work with the TDSB's Parent Involvement Advisory Committee ("PIAC") to ensure that Etobicoke-Centre parents and residents are kept informed and engaged in the public education process and to provide support to school councils where needed.

You can help by letting us know what education issues are important to you or through volunteering some time to attend at school council, PIAC or Board meetings or helping us to produce this newsletter.

If you are interested in helping, please send us an email at sthiele@thetorontoparty.com.

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

A STREETPROOFING TIP FROM THE TDSB

- **Keep valuables such as cell phones, expensive jewellery, laptops and personal music devices out of sight as much as possible when in public places.**

QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION NOW

c/o Stephen Thiele
Gardiner Roberts LLP
40 King Street West, Suite 3100
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 3Y2

(P) 416-559-3424

(E) sthiele@thetorontoparty.com

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