

On January 15, 2015, Ms. Margaret Wilson submitted her report, “Review of the Toronto District School Board” to the Honourable Liz Sandals, Minister of Education.

As reported by the media, the report slammed TDSB trustees for their operation of Canada’s largest public school board. Ms. Wilson criticized the involvement of trustees in school board hiring accountable.

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

## MAJOR REFORM IS WARRANTED

On January 22, 2015, Suban Abdullahi and Husein Kirefu were elected as the TDSB Parent Involvement Advisory Committee Ward 5 representative and alternate, respectively.

Congratulations!

**FEBRUARY 2015**

ISSUE 1 NUMBER 2

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ETOBICOKE CENTRE SCHOOLS

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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###### More inside!

# THE WILSON REPORT: TRUSTEES SLAMMED

QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION NOW!

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

ESAC NEWS

Etobicoke Centre February dates of interest:

* TDSB Board meetings: Wed., Feb. 4, 2015 (regular meeting), Tues. Feb. 10, 2015 (special meeting), 5050 Yonge St., meetings commence 4:30 and 5:30 pm, respectively.
* PIAC meeting: Wed., Feb. 11, 2015, 5050 Yonge St., 6:30 pm – 10:00 pm.
* PIAC appreciation event: Thurs., Feb. 26, 2015, Montecassino Hotel, 3710 Chesswod Dr., 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. To register, visit www.torontopiac.com.

Calendar of Events

HOW THEY VOTED ON MS. QUAN’S SALARY INCREASE

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In Favour | Against |
| Michael Ford | Pamela Gough |
| Howard Kaplan | Marit Stiles |
| Robin Pilkey | Shelley Laskin |
| Jennifer Arp | Gerri Gershon |
| Alexander Brown | Jennifer Story |
| Sheila Ward | Ken Lister |
| Sheila Cary-Meagher | Jerry Chadwick |
| David Smith |  |
| Manna Wong |  |
| Shaun Chen |  |

ABSENT FROM THE VOTE

Chris Glover

Tiffany Ford

Chris Tonks

Ausma Malik

Parthi Kandvel

One of the issues that has plagued the TDSB for over a year was the salary paid to Director Donna Quan. Notwithstanding a provincial government wage freeze, the TDSB entered into an employment contract with Ms. Quan that resulted in her getting paid more than the previous director, Dr. Chris Spence.

Last year, the controversy concerning Ms. Quan’s contract resulted in some trustees demanding that it be disclosed. Eventually, the contract was provided to new Board Chair, Mr. Shaun Chen. The contract disclosed that Ms. Quan had received a salary increase.

On January 12, 2015, TDSB trustees voted 10-7 to affirm Ms. Quan’s contract.

However following the release of Ms. Wilson’s report, which recommended that Ms. Quan’s contract comply with the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010* and respect the advice provided by the Minister in January 2014 and December 2014, Ms. Quan agreed to a reduction in her salary to the same amount previously received by Dr. Spence.

Ms. Quan did the right thing and we applaud her.

### DIRECTOR QUAN DOES RIGHT THING

“The practice of trustee involvement in the promotion processes has become deeply ingrained in the culture of the Board. According to most of the professionals I interviewed, it is a major contributor to the culture of fear.”

“One principal said, ‘The culture of fear is epidemic. People won’t talk’. The fear factor is such that many staff members avoid using the Board email system, and many principals and superintendents now contact each other on their personal phones. They believe that Board phone and email systems are regularly monitored. From the point of view of many principals, all of the senior administration is afraid of the trustees.”

“This is a board where there appears to be no capacity to say NO within the political environment.”

“Many people reported that they knew of principals, and superintendents, who had been summarily transferred after disagreeing with a trustee.”

QUOTES FROM THE WILSON REPORT

basis and that new trustees were also getting involved in managing day-to-day operations.

Ms. Wilson reports that some trustees had boasted about being allowed to decide on school programs for “their schools” and that some had a direct say in procurement, which included deciding on the colour of pencils.

In other cases, Ms. Wilson noted that trustees have intervened at the school level in the suspension of students.

It is time to scale back the role of TDSB trustees and to end the “culture of fear” at the TDSB. The education of our children is too valuable.

and contributing to the “culture of fear” that has gripped the TDSB.

In her report, Ms. Wilson states: “I regret to confirm that the ‘culture of fear’…is even more pervasive than it was in 2013 and that it has seeped down to the level of school vice-principals and principals and, in some cases, teachers.”

Ms. Wilson further found that many trustees interfere in operational decisions of the TDSB on a regular

#### CULTURE OF FEAR MUST END

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Quality Public Education Now is an independent production of the Etobicoke Centre Schools Advisory Committee. ESAC is an independent association of members.

NEWSLETTER SIGN UP

PLEASE STAY INFORMED

SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER AT WWW.STEPHENENTHIELE.CA

PIAC minutes for December 10, 2014 show as follows: “D. Williams in reference to a newsletter from the Etobicoke Centre Schools Advisory Committee, clarified that PIAC has no affiliation with this committee. It has come to our attention that there is a newsletter being circulated by Etobicoke Centre Schools Advisory Committee which seems to imply that there is an affiliation between Etobicoke Centre Schools Advisory Committee and PIAC. There is no affiliation between the Etobicoke Centre Schools Advisory Committee and PIAC.”

ESAC has never implied such an affiliation.

**PIAC MINUTES**

**FROM DECEMBER 10, 2014**

**MEETING**

#### QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION NOW!

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”) and other engaged parent groups 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.

WE NEED YOUR HELP