



Minutes of the Equity and Inclusivity Task Force (TF) of the Lester B. Pearson School Board
Meeting

Held On-Line

October 2, 2020 19h:00

Chaired by Dr. Myrna Lashley

Present:

Sharad Bhargava
Tiffany Callender
Natalie Constant
Lisa Davis Mancini
Andrew Henry
Sabi Hinkson
Carol James
Colin Jamieson
Kemba Mitchell
Wusua Mitchell
Fariha Naqvi Mohamed
Matthew Pike
Finn Poirier
Thomas Rhymes
Felix Robitaille
Shari Waldrich
Nimalan Yoganathan

Absent:

Khobee Gibson

The Chair called the meeting to order at 19h:00.

The chair welcomed the members and introduced Dr. Cindy Finn, Director General of the Lester B. Pearson school Board as a guest.

A letter from Erico Ciccone, MNA of the *Assemblée Nationale Du Québec* was well received by the Task Force, and in turn, a letter of acknowledgment will be sent by the chair on behalf of the TF committee.

The chair informed members of the engagement of an administrative assistant to assist the TF in its work. A shared folder has been organized for the TF committee on Google Drive. This is a space where Committee members will find research materials, report templates, meeting information, and other pertinent information. Also, five separate folders have been created within the TF Drive for each of the subcategories (*Race and Ethnicities, Religions, sexualities, Abilities, and Genders*) in which articles and information may be placed.

A uniform letter inviting the community to share stories and recommendations will be created and placed in the TF Drive for the committee to distribute.

Dr. Cindy Finn, Director General of the Lester B. Pearson School Board introduced herself to the committee and extended gratitude for the brave effort of taking on this important task. The school Board will send remuneration to each of the members of the TF, as a small token of acknowledgment for all of their hard work. Dr. Finn welcomed the invitation to future TF meetings.

The chair asked each subcommittee leader to share their respective main topics of research.

The *Race and Ethnicities* subgroup will explore the different areas of ethnicity. A preamble will be written explaining general issues relevant to race and ethnicities pertinent to indigenous, Black, South Asian, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, and Asian communities from Kindergarten to high school and Continuing Education using evidence-based literature.

The *Abilities* subgroup will explain in their preamble the areas, relevant to abilities, concerning advocacy, policies, neurodiversity, physical disabilities, mental health issues, class-room adaptation, and teacher training.

The *Sexualities* subgroup will explore the issues concerning the LGBTQ2+ communities. And in their preamble highlight issues pertinent to sexualities. Some areas to be explored include special needs sex education, experiences of bullying from children of same-sex couples, safe spaces for members of the LGBTQ2+ community within our schools and centers (i.e bathrooms and locker rooms), usage of appropriate language and definitions.

The Genders subgroup's preamble will highlight issues pertinent to genders. It will delve into gender definitions, language, education stereotypes, gender-neutral spaces, achievement gaps between males and females, and gender policing. A discussion ensued resulting in recognizing that in some areas of inquiry, members will find it necessary to consult with other subgroups as there are commonalities between topics, even though manifestations and needs will differ from group to group.

The *Religion* subgroup will investigate inclusion and diversity amongst all religions. Prejudice and stereotypes of Christian, Jewish, Buddhism, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Indigenous Spirituality and atheist/agnostic beliefs will also be highlighted. The preamble should emphasize the need for the liberty of religious thought and practice, including respect for the spirituality and religions of all persons.

The chair requested that each subgroup set up on-line meetings and commence work as soon as possible. She also asked that a progress update be provided to members every two weeks. This will be followed by a written report that will be submitted to the chair which will be placed on the website for public availability.

The next TF meeting will be held on October 23, 2020, at 19h:00.

The meeting was adjourned at 21h:00