



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Update on the Establishment of a City of Toronto– Toronto School Boards Working Group

Date:	October 22, 2012
To:	Executive Committee
From:	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	16167

SUMMARY

This report is an update on work towards the establishment of a City of Toronto–Toronto School Boards Working Group, as requested in Member Motion 23.3 which Council referred to the City Manager's Office on May 8, 2012. This report recommends for discussion a draft Terms of Reference for such a Working Group.

The intent of the Working Group will be to provide advice and direction on how to better inform and coordinate on issues that concern and affect Toronto residents, including School accommodation review (ARC), closures, land sales and community service delivery. This Working Group will not consider land use planning or capital budget, which both have separate processes, nor will it address program agreements that are negotiated directly between City and School Boards staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director of Social Development Finance & Administration recommends that:

- 1) City Council approve the draft Terms of Reference (Appendix A) for the City of Toronto–Toronto School Boards Working Group.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of May 8, 2012, City Council considered a member motion (MM23.3 - Working Together - Establishing a City of Toronto–Toronto School Boards Working Group, by Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Michael Thompson) that sought to establish a Working Group comprised of City Councillors and School Board Trustees. The motion was referred to the City Manager's Office.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.MM23.3>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

From school lands to community service delivery, the relationship of the City's residents to its schools is strong. Changes to the school system have a strong and important effect on local neighbourhoods and city-wide service strategies.

Staff and political leaders from the City and Toronto School Boards often work together closely. However, to date this work has focused mostly on program-specific issues. A coordinated effort to share information and plan collaboratively at the political level may provide opportunities for the City and the School Boards to maximize resources and to minimize negative effects on local communities.

COMMENTS

Consulting with interested Councillors and School Boards staff

The draft Terms of Reference will serve as a framework for consultation with staff of Toronto School Boards, as well as interested Councillors. By working from an approved draft of the Terms of Reference, City staff can present School Board staff with a clear vision for the Working Group. This will lead to more productive consultations.

Staff will also consult with both City and School Boards clerks on the most appropriate process to provide secretarial support for meetings of the Working Group. This process will need to be in keeping with requirements of both the City of Toronto Act and the Education Act.

City Staff Support to the Working Group

The establishment of this Working Group will result in a broadening of engagement with the School Boards. However, the proposed Terms of Reference specifically do not include program agreements as these are more appropriately negotiated between City and Board staff within their specific functional areas.

How City staff can best support the work of the City of Toronto–Toronto School Boards Working Group is an important consideration for meaningful and effective collaboration. This work should build on existing staff resources and teams. The School Lands Staff Team is an interdivisional Staff team that was created to respond to the School Lands Property Acquisition Framework and Funding Strategy adopted by Council on May 11, 2010.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/cc/decisions/2010-05-11-cc49-dd.htm>

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-29044.pdf>

The School Lands Staff Team will reorganize and expand as required in order to have capacity to address broader responsibilities of the City of Toronto–Toronto School Boards Working Group. It is anticipated that the School Boards will adopt a similar internal process. A three person interagency staff body consisting of one staff from the City, one from the Toronto District School Board, and one from the Toronto Catholic District School Board would then provide coordinating support to the Working Group.

In this way, interagency collaboration will reflect the efforts of representatives on the Working Group to maximize public assets to the benefit of Toronto residents.

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: City of Toronto & Toronto School Boards Working Group – Draft Terms of Reference

**City of Toronto - Toronto School Boards Working Group
DRAFT Terms of Reference**

Background:

The City of Toronto and its local school boards are partners in serving a shared constituency. From school lands to community service delivery, schools are integral to neighbourhoods. Changes to these physical assets have considerable effect on local neighbourhoods and city-wide service strategies.

Although staff and political leaders often work together closely, City divisions usually work with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) and both French language boards at the staff level and on program-specific issues. A coordinated effort to share information and plan collaboratively would provide opportunities for the City and the School Boards to maximize resources and to minimize negative effects on local communities.

Purpose:

The City of Toronto – Toronto School Boards Working Group will serve as a coordinating body for the sharing of information and development of strategic direction on matters of mutual interest between elected representatives of the City of Toronto and the School Boards that serve Toronto.

Scope of Work:

This Working Group will provide a forum to collaborate and jointly problem solve in a timely and effective manner.

The Working Group's mandate will be:

1. To provide a forum for the sharing of information between the elected representatives of the City and School Boards on matters of mutual interest and concern,
2. To consider reports from City and/or School Board officials on matters of mutual interest or concern, and
3. To provide strategic recommendations to the School Boards, and City Council through the Community Development and Recreation Committee and under the prevailing procedure by-laws of the respective body, as appropriate.

The Working Group will address land-related issues regarding school properties, including:

- Area Review Committees
- Surplus schools
- School closures
- School redevelopments

The Working Group will also consider city infrastructural development of potential interest to the School Boards.

The following topics will be considered out-of-scope for the Working Group:

- Land use planning
- Capital budgets

Composition:

The City of Toronto – Toronto School Boards Working Group's membership will be comprised of elected representatives from the City and Toronto-area school boards. The Working Group will be composed of up to nine (9) members as follows:

- Four (4) Members of City Council with the initial Council Members to be appointed for the balance of the current term ending on November 30, 2014.
- Two (2) Trustees appointed by the Toronto District School Board with the initial Trustees to be appointed for the balance of the current term ending on November 30, 2014.
- Two (2) Trustees appointed by the Toronto Catholic District School Board with the initial Trustees to be appointed for the balance of the current term ending on November 30, 2014.
- One (1) Trustee from the Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique Centre-Sud or the Conseil Scolaire Viamonde, to be appointed by the respective boards on an alternating basis for one-year terms, the first appointment to be made by the Conseil Scolaire Viamonde.

The City of Toronto Striking Committee will appoint and re-appoint City Council members, as necessary.

The School Boards will appoint and re-appoint School Board members, as necessary.

Governance:

The members of the Working Group will vote on a Chair and Co-Chair at its first meeting.

The Working Group will meet twice per year.

Quorum of the Working Group will be half the membership of the Working Group plus one.

Meeting Support:

Staff support for meetings will be provided by the City Clerk's Office. Staffing of meetings and associated costs such as agenda printing can be provided within existing resources.

Policy staff support will be provided by the Social Development, Finance and Administration Division, in collaboration with staff from the Toronto District School Board, and the Toronto Catholic District School Board including the preparation of reports as required.