

May 26, 2015

To: Members, City-School Board Advisory Committee

Re: TS 1.3 - Policy Agenda for the City-School Boards Advisory Committee

I have reviewed the report outlining the policy agenda for this committee. The role of schools within neighbourhoods is important for every single neighbourhood in Toronto. The principle of schools as “community assets” is an important one, and has long been identified and adopted by many previous councils and community organizations as policy.

The committee’s has been asked to address the following issues:

- a viable framework for retaining public ownership of former school properties;
- Alternative funding sources beyond municipal funding;
- Pupil accommodation formula.

I have three observations.

- (1) It is not clear what “alternative funding sources beyond municipal funding” means. Is this a call for privatization?
- (2) Achievement of any goal to retain school lands within the public domain will require legislative amendments. Therefore a comprehensive review of legislative changes that are required to achieve this should be prepared. Perhaps this is already contemplated in the report, but it isn’t evident.
- (3) Public discourse, outside the stricture of committee rules, would be useful to build support for moving forward.

Yours truly,



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