

Economic and Community Development

From: Parent Engaged in Education <parentengagementgroup@gmail.com>
Sent: May 25, 2021 1:59 PM
To: Economic and Community Development
Subject: Comments for consideration of the Committee on item re: Parents Engaged in Education

Categories: Communication



Parent Engaged in Education <parentengagementgroup@gmail.com>

to ecdc

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the May 26, 2021 Economic and Community Development Committee meeting on item 2021.EC22.7, Parents Engaged in Education

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

Thank you to the Committee for hearing our request for support to keep CANADA'S FIRST EDUCATION BANK open.

I am providing a link to a virtual tour of the Family Service Centre/Education Bank for members to have a better understanding of the resources provided to low income children in Toronto.

<https://youtu.be/bL8zSwgXxE4>

In addition to the benefits that the Education Bank offers children/teens who come in and receive resources on a consistent basis, Parents Engaged in Education have always provided services to the most vulnerable youth in our city. We have never spoken about this work, as we were happy to do it anonymously, but now realize that this wider perspective of the value of our services may help Committee members feel more confident in suggesting funding support.

In the past year, we have responded to the following situations, some on more than one occasion;

1. When a young person is being relocated out of a human trafficking situation, we provide everything they need to reconnect with their education and community, including computers, backpacks, other technology, self-care amenities etc.

2. We support the violence reduction team when they have a gang member coming out and relocating to Scarborough, we provide all of the materials, including computers, to these young people so that they can return to school.
3. We support youth in mental health wards in Toronto hospitals, including the large ward at Humber River Hospital on a bi-monthly basis with materials that focus on learning as well as comfort and stress management items as well as some creative items and books.
4. When the police remove a child from their home and relocate them, we make sure they have everything they need to continue to be able to take part in school as well as a couple of bags of books, art supplies, games, fun activities etc. to help calm the trauma they have experienced.
5. We support families in domestic abuse shelters who have had to relocate with next to nothing, to make sure that the children receive any items they may need to assist with their children's schooling or raise their spirits.

We continue to stand ready with our partners to support Toronto's at-risk youth.

We focused and prepared our budget to keep the Education Bank operating through 2021 and planning for 2022, however, the sheer numbers of children we are serving in one month is 6 - 8 times our forecast. This has resulted in our having to move our budget and we expect that we will have to close the Education Bank at the end of August 2021 without government funding.

We are committed to continuing to solicit grants and funding opportunities to keep the resources we provide to children/youth growing consistently and expand the services we can provide families. We do need to start from a place of base funding so we are confident in paying our rent, utilities and have a minimum of one and a half staff, so that our volunteers are not constantly under the stress of impending closure and spending hundreds and hundreds of hours searching for every \$1,000. donation.

I am attaching the budget created for 2022. This budget has been moved up to September 1, 2021 as a start date as we face increasing need from families everyday.

You can also see more about our work on Global News "Making a Difference" which will air Wednesday, May 26th on the 5:30pm news broadcast.

I am grateful to the members of this committee for hearing our case and should there be subsequent questions I am happy to respond.

Theresa

Attachments area

[Preview YouTube video Family Service Centre Featuring Canada's First Education Bank Virtual Tour](#)



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