

Communication on the Report on EPAN Schools

Thank you, Superintendent Derek Chen, for providing the Board with this report. While this report begins to explain how this funding program works, it also leads to more questions. Please indulge me as I try to elaborate from what I have been able to learn belonging to an EPAN school for many years and asking questions of this program whenever the opportunities arose.

In the 2015/2016 school year, block budgets were reduced by approximately 30%. This reduction was an indirect effect of a Board deficit, and it impacted our classrooms. With smaller block budgets, schools had to do more with less; some schools were able to increase their fundraising efforts to fill the gaps but not all schools are that fortunate. EPAN funding program began the following year in the 2016/2017 school year.

There is no mention of how much funding is available or when the schools receive it. Funding for this program is determined at the end of the Board's fiscal year from the previous school year. Usually, the Board does not finalize their financials for the previous school year until November or December of the current school year. Therefore, EPAN schools do not receive funding at the beginning of the school year, but usually in March, a little bit more than halfway through the current school year. Imagine how difficult it is for the administration to plan the entire school year unknowing to them if, when, and how much more funding they will receive. In essence, EPAN schools wait to see what money is left over from the previous year and then, halfway through the current school year, will receive additional funding. In most cases, this is an amount that was deducted from their block budget in 2015/2016. **Please remember these are our schools in most need.**

How do we know they are in most need? By the acronym EPAN – which stands for Equity **Poverty** Action Network; it's in the name. I understand that social economic factors (along with N-tile scores) play a part in the designation of a school as EPAN, however, when I am speaking to parents or a CSPC and explaining what an EPAN school is, people are taken aback that poverty is in the acronym, and no one wants to be reminded about being less in society. **Now would be a good time to find a different name.**

In closing, the implementation of the funding program greatly fails on our students. If these schools are in need, can we continue to address that they need the additional funds at the beginning of the school year? Only in this fashion can the funds be used properly and make an impact so that every student in our Board has an equal opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Thank you,

Joe Fiorante

St. Jane Frances CSPC Chair

Ward 3 CPIC Rep

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