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## **Whole Child School**

### Community Survey: Summary of Results

January 2009

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## Whole Child School – December 2008 Survey Results

The survey was open to respondents from Monday December 8, 2008 to Monday December 15th, 2008.

**269** individuals responded to the survey and we had an 89% full completion rate (respondents who made it all the way to the end of the survey and pressed the “DONE” button).

The survey software was set up to only allow one survey to be completed per IP address (individual computer). Therefore, there may be a very small percentage of family duplication but overall responses can be considered unique.

A quick recap of survey questions:

1. For each child that you intend to register in Whole Child School (WCS) for the 2009-2010 school year, please indicate: a) the grade they will enter in September 2009, and b) your level of commitment to registering them into WCS.
2. What school does your child(ren) currently attend? If they are not attending school yet, please indicate their designated TDSB home school.
3. For each child you will be registering into WCS, what type of paid caregiving (if any) will you require? Please select all that apply.
4. How concerned are you about securing caregiving options for your children outside of their designated school hours?
5. For those families who require some level of caregiving for their children (either daycare or after-school care) please indicate how comfortable you are in considering each of the following options:
6. Will your ability to secure caregiving arrangements affect whether you will send your child(ren) to Whole Child School?
7. Approximately, how far away from the Whole Child School location (Roden Jr PS) do your children live? Roden is located at 151 Hiawatha Road, Toronto, ON M4L 2Y1.
8. Thinking about a typical school day, what is the method of transportation you expect to use MOST OFTEN to get your child(ren) to and from Whole Child School?
9. If any of the following were available to you, please indicate your level of interest in the following transportation options:
10. In the TDSB's Alternative School System, it is generally mandatory to attend an Information Night in order to learn about a school and pick up an application to register your child(ren). The Whole Child School (WCS) Information Night is tentatively planned to be held at Roden PS on the evening of Thursday February 5th, 2009. This will be announced officially when the timing is confirmed. With this date in mind, do you plan to attend the WCS Information Night?
11. Are there any questions you would like to see specifically addressed at the Whole Child School Information Night? Please list all here.
12. Are there any specific barriers that may keep you from sending your child to Whole Child School? If so, please elaborate here so that we may better understand your issue.
13. Do you have any other comments, impressions or general feedback that you would like to share with the Whole Child School Organizing Committee?

**INTENT TO REGISTER AND DEGREE OF INTEREST**

For the 2009 Launch Year we can anticipate at least **160 students** will register for Whole Child School. Of this group, 92 have indicated that WCS is their first choice.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Total Number of Children</b>	<b>Total “Definite”</b>	<b>Top 2 Box<sup>1</sup></b>
JK	69	24 (35%)	47
SK	47	18 (38%)	30
1	46	14 (30%)	27
2	33	11 (33%)	16
3	27	9 (33%)	16
4	16	7 (44%)	8
5	14	3 (21%)	7
6	9	1 (11%)	3
7 & 8	14	5 (36%)	7
	275	92	161 (59%)

There were an additional 68 students for whom parents indicated they were “Not School Age Yet”. Of these, 41 fell into the Top 2 Boxes (60%) for Degree of Interest (22 had listed WCS as a first choice for them).

<sup>1</sup> Compilation of “Definitely Will Register” and “Will Register but considering other options”

## **INTENT TO REGISTER AND DEGREE OF INTEREST**

For those parents who did not select WCS as their first choice, they were asked to provide more detail about their concerns and reservations. The most consistent responses that came in were focused on:

- 1. Location (primarily transportation logistics or school is just too far)**
- 2. Disruption involved in moving child from an existing school situation**
- 3. Concerns about securing child care (mainly focused on the JK/SK age level)**
- 4. Weighing WCS against French Immersion**
- 5. Ability to handle special needs students**

In addition, some just need more information before they make their decision about things like: more detailed curriculum information, teacher training and background, key differences from a regular public school.

**POTENTIAL IMPACT ON EXISTING SCHOOL REGISTRATION**

<b>Designated Home School</b>	<b># of students</b>	<b>% of total</b>
Roden Jr PS	21	8.1%
Leslieville Jr PS	12	4.6%
Morse Street PS	12	4.6%
Frankland Community School Jr	11	4.2%
Withrow Avenue PS	11	4.2%
Bruce Jr PS	10	3.8%
Bowmore PS	9	3.5%
Blake Street Jr PS	8	3.1%
Earl Beatty Jr & Sr PS	8	3.1%
Pape Avenue PS	8	3.1%
Beaches Alternative School Jr	6	2.3%
Earl Haig Jr PS	6	2.3%
Jackman Avenue Jr PS	6	2.3%
Wilkinson PS	6	2.3%
Dundas Jr PS	5	1.9%
RH McGregor School	5	1.9%
Chester ES	4	1.5%
Gledhill Jr PS	4	1.5%
Kimberley Jr PS	4	1.5%
Williamson Road PS	4	1.5%
Adam Beck Jr PS	2	0.8%
Kew Beach Jr PS	2	0.8%
Norway PS	2	0.8%
Secord ES	2	0.8%
Balmy Beach Community School Jr	1	0.4%
Diefenbaker ES	1	0.4%
Duke of Connaught Jr & Sr PS	1	0.4%
First Nations School of Toronto Jr & Sr	1	0.4%
Parkside ES	1	0.4%
William Burgess ES	1	0.4%

The good news is that interest in WCS is spread across a broad group of schools in Wards 15 and 16. There are six specific schools that represent the greatest concentration of interested respondents. Interest from Roden families is significantly higher than other schools; however, this will be partially due to the high level of awareness of WCS amongst the Roden parent community as well as convenience of school location.

**POTENTIAL IMPACT ON EXISTING SCHOOL REGISTRATION**

From a TDSB perspective, the greatest concern may be around the migration of Roden students to WCS. And, contrary to my assumption around where Roden community interest lies, primary interest in WCS is NOT in leveraging the upper grade opportunity (given that Roden is a junior school only). Instead, like other schools, most 'migration' will come from the lower grades (JK-2).

	JK	SK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	not school age yet	TOTALS
<b>Roden</b>	6	5	2	4	0	2	2	0	2	0	5	28
<b>Leslieville</b>	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	13
<b>Morse</b>	5	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	14
<b>Frankland</b>	4	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	0	2	14
<b>Withrow</b>	1	2	5	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	3	17
<b>Bruce</b>	1	3	2	1	3	0	3	0	0	0	2	15
<b>Bowmore</b>	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	10

## DAYCARE AND CAREGIVING REQUIREMENTS/CONCERNS

Caregiving requirements for WCS students will likely be significant:

- 104 respondents indicated that ½ day care will be required for JK and SK students
- 124 respondents stated that lunchtime care will be necessary
- 98 respondents will need after school care and 57 respondents will require before-school care
- 138 responses stated that no caregiving options would be required.

35% of respondents are **Extremely Concerned** about securing caregiving options and another 24% are **Somewhat Concerned** (almost 60% of the total).

Almost 40% of families who will require caregiving of some sort have indicated that the ability to secure acceptable caregiving arrangements will affect their ability to send their child(ren) to WCS. An additional 22% are still uncertain.

Most parents will Definitely Consider any daycare/after-school/before-school options that are provided onsite at Roden/WCS. In addition, most are open to definitely or possibly considering offsite solutions that are created in partnership with/dedicated to WCS.

## DAYCARE AND CAREGIVING REQUIREMENTS/CONCERNS

*Both my husband and I work full time. I would need daycare for my child since JK will likely still be 1/2 day at that point. our current daycare will escort to Bowmore, but Roden is quite a bit further to walk. I would also want any childcare to match the quality of my current childcare (diet, educational programs, etc) so that is a major consideration in our decision on whether to enroll in Whole child school.*

*As working parents we have no choice but to choose a school with before/after care options.*

*We will need appropriate care before/after school hours. Ideally this care should engage and educate the children, not just provide a free play area.*

*If a daycare is set up by WCS it would be much more of a seamless day for the children vs. having to transport the children to various daycares in the neighbourhood. It would also be nice if the daycare option had a similar outlook on education as WCS. One of my concerns is around daycare subsidy as we receive a daycare subsidy and would need to send our son to a daycare where we could continue to use the subsidy.*

*Our older child can easily bike home from that location after school, but this is impractical for lunchtimes. Our younger child will absolutely need afterschool care - we already have this for him - it is just a matter of transportation, but then if there is afterschool care near the new WC School, we would take advantage of it.*

*As I am a single parent, I cannot send my child to a school that doesn't offer after school (and also preferably before school) care.*

*Unfortunately childcare is simply a reality that needs to be addressed. I wish it were otherwise. I sincerely hope that you plan to provide childcare that aligns with your incredible school philosophy.*

*Would not be able to switch my children into this school without after school childcare.*

*Just wondering whether lunchtime care is an issue... Are the students in grades 1+ not supervised over the lunch hour?*

*Both parents work full-time until 5 pm, so finding childcare is essential.*

**DISTANCE FROM RODEN & TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

Almost 60% of survey respondents indicate that they live within 3 km of the Roden school location and more than 75% live within 5km of the school.



47% of families expect to transport their children to school by car or other motor vehicle. 33% plan to walk or bike and 13% will take public transit to get to school.

A significant number of families (170) are extremely or somewhat interested in a **Community School Bus option** which could reduce the amount of motor vehicle traffic around the school. There is also a fairly high level of interest (150 families) in exploring **Carpooling Arrangements**.

## WCS INFORMATION NIGHT

**203** Survey respondents replied that they would be attending the WCS Information/Registration Night!

Overall feedback was incredibly positive about WCS and there is a lot of excitement and energy in the community surrounding this initiative. As with anything new (particularly when it relates to children), however, there tend to be a lot of questions. The questions/issues/topics that parents would like to see addressed at the Information Night fall into the following broad categories:

- Teachers
- Curriculum
- Class Sizes/Grades/School size
- School Inter-relationship questions (Roden/WCS)
- Registration Process/Admissions
- Daycare
- Parent involvement
- Special Needs students
- Transportation Options
- School policies and governance
- School/Educational Philosophy
- Equity/Diversity policy
- Challenges of being a new school
- Student Involvement
- Physical space (indoor and outdoor)
- Lunch & Nutrition

APPENDIX ONE, following, provides the more detailed topics and questions that were posed by survey respondents under each of these headings. We will want to consider the best way to address these different topic areas.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX ONE

### Detailed Respondent Topics for Information Night

- Teachers
  - More information about the school's programs and teachers
  - Teacher qualifications
  - chosen teachers and their background
  - staffing
  - Meeting the teachers and principal
  - Will there be teachers aids in the classroom?
  - I would like to know more about the selection of teachers and if we will be able to meet the teacher prior to September?
  - Will the teachers have special training in terms of facilitating a learning environment akin to a Waldorf or Montessori classroom?
  - Teacher child ratio
  - How will teachers working at this school differ in their training from those in the mainstream TDSB?
  - the teachers' experience delivering alternative education - or are the teachers simply pulled from the standard TDSB candidates?
  - Fuller explanation of teaching methods and how they might differ from mainstream
  - I want to know how strongly the teachers can stand behind the ideas this school represents without caving to a standardized curriculum
  - Who are the teachers?
  - Do you have a guideline for teachers to follow, so that they can teach the philosophy effectively?
  - How do you plan to recruit teachers?
  - Would the teachers be required to have a knowledge of Waldorf principles/other holistic principles?
  - Have staff already been hired?
  - Knowing the alternative direction the school plans to go- how do you plan to train the teachers hired from the TDSB pool in Waldorf style teaching?
  - When WILL THE TEACHERS BE HIRED?
  - How many male teachers will the school employ?
  - We'd like to know more about the hiring of teachers. What kind of process will this entail? Is it the responsibility of the TDSB and the principal at Roden PS? How will WCS ensure teachers hired are practitioners of Waldorf and Reggio methodology and equitable teaching practices?
  - experience of teachers
  
- Curriculum
  - Who is designing the WCS curriculum and in what capacity is it in the vein of a Waldorf-inspired education?
  - How closely does WCS follow the waldorf style?
  - What does the exact curriculum look like
  - Curriculum outline
  - Detailed curriculum information
  - I am very keen on the arts based learning and would like to have examples of how this will be a part of the children's day
  - how much influence does the TDSB curriculum have on the WCS
  - What (if any) additional programs will be offered? (i.e. special needs/gifted programs/additional languages?)

- how teachers plan to balance diverse learning styles
  - Will the curriculum and approach of WCS address skill building like proper letter formation when printing and phonics in the primary grades?
  - how the curriculum will be taught as compared to a “regular” school
  - Will learning be self-directed or teacher-led?
  - Curriculum. I am wondering what the school will offer and the differences between this school and other schools
  - What is the curriculum?
  - how much waldorf is involved in the curriculum of the children
  - How committed to the intensive French in Gr. 7 is the school?
  - Structure of classrooms -learning outcomes
  - details on curriculum
  - Curriculum and exactly HOW you teach i.e. math, sciences etc.
  - Will the school follow the TDSB curriculum?
  - sport and music opportunities as part of curriculum
  - Has the curriculum been decided on? What compromises had to be made to make the TDSB happy?
  - What is the Ontario curriculum addressed in a holistic manner?
  - How much is the curriculum based on Waldorf methodology?
  - More detail about curriculum
  - Curriculum
  - What is the relationship between the application of Waldorf philosophy and the introduction of reading skills?
  - Teaching/school supplies to empower the curriculum envisioned, (are donations possible to ensure that some of the lovely natural beeswax, and high quality books, paper is available for creative arts based learning)?
  - What about French and Music programmes?
  - How does Whole Child School ensure that students meet same academic criteria as public or Catholic schools? For example, will my child learn how to read, spell, math, etc. same grade levels as other systems.
  - Academic quality
  - Curriculum, and specifically how teachers can meet the demands of the provincial curriculum and follow the waldorf guidelines by grade.
  - what a typical day would look like.
  - More info on curriculum and teaching methods specific to each subject
  - curriculum integration and any planned focus areas (arts, outdoor ed, etc)
  - plans for daily physical activity
  - We are hopeful that useful languages will be included in the curricula such as Latin American Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, etc... (far more important in the big Global Picture for these students than Canadian French which they can get just about anywhere else in Canada)
  - Is music part of the curriculum beginning in JK?
  - Is French offered any earlier than grade four?
  - Specific curriculum
  - holiday rituals
- **Class Sizes/Grades/School size**
    - Is this definitely going up to grade 8?
    - What ages will the school serve?
    - more information on the plans for the older grades

- Only whether or not there will be a grade eight class, or we would even be comfortable with a 7/8 split
  - What grades will grade 6 be paired up with if there is limited enrollment: 5,6, or 6,7?
  - What if there is only small numbers of kids for the older grades?
  - What are your current numbers of children interested by grade level?
  - What is the expected size of the student body?
  - Is the program from K-8?
  - classroom size
  - how many students are fairly sure of going into Grade 5? Will Grade 5 be a split class, and if so, with what Grade? How many students to you expect in total in that class?
  - how grades will be combined
  - I don't like that it's located in a Junior High School. How is this being taken into account, especially for kindergarten students?
  - Format for JK classes (ie half days, alternating days, etc.)
  - Will the school go up to grade 8?
  - What's the minimum number of children you need for each grade?
  - class size;
  - grade splits
  - target class sizes
  - Discussion of what happens to children when they age out of Whole Child - eg, likelihood of expanding grades up to 8, where students would likely transition for grades 7-8.
  - Minimum enrollment numbers. Could it be that my children's grade could be cancelled in one of the following years?
  - What will the class sizes be?
  - Class structure--i.e. separate or split grades
  - What are the planned classes sizes?
  - size of whole student body
- **School Inter-relationship questions (Roden/WCS)**
    - Will there be coordination of the WCS arts program with the Roden choir, band, etc.
    - Is the WCS secure from the rest of the Public School?
    - Can Public School students, parents, etc access the WCS classrooms and facilities?
    - Logistically how are the two schools going to run in the same building (teachers, play times and spaces, entrances...)
    - please address recess and how the school will integrate with the other kids attending Roden.
    - Will students have access to athletic / other teams available to Roden students?
    - will the WCS kids integrate with the Roden students? to what extent will this integration take place?
    - will we be able to meet the principal of Roden at the info night?
    - will she address us with her vision for administering a "dual" school?
    - Whether or not the WCS expects full or part co-operation from the principal of Roden P.S.
    - Having not visited Roden PS, what kind of facility is it re: gym, outdoor space?
    - Will school sports teams be in conjunction with Roden?
    - How much interaction with current Roden students?
    - Will teachers be shared?
    - Principal Commitment
    - chance to tour the school and grounds
    - hear about safety measures/supervision at the school
    - meet the principal
    - Will team sports be encouraged and organized. ie. basketball, volleyball, soccer, etc...
    - experience of principal

- Registration Process/Admissions

- How children will ultimately be chosen for acceptance
- I would like a clear idea of the application process
- Are there academic levels and expectations you have in order for acceptance, or/and a feeling for the right fit for the child?
- How will you handle our situation with 2 kids, who will be in JK and gr. 2 (ie. lottery)
- Because it's a lottery system for application, how could we get both of our kids in? Do you have some kind of sibling policy or preference?
- What will be the admissions process?
- What are the chances of my children being admitted?
- If one child is accepted will the other be automatically accepted?
- Registration procedures for future years.
- Clarification of the application/registration process. Is acceptance to the school based on a lottery system? First-come, first-served? etc
- What is the likely hood that I could get my child in to the school, if I do not start in September 2009
- When would we know for sure if our child is accepted?
- How registration will work if the enrollment is too high for example JK - will it then be a lottery?
- looking for further information on how registration/enrollment will be handled. Will there be a waiting list/lottery system?
- Rules for sibling attendance (are they automatically eligible, or do they also have to go through the lottery)?

- Daycare

- Daycare/afterschool care
- Although we can all do our own searches to find childcare, some options of what is available in the area would be appreciated
- Daycare.
- I'm particularly interested in knowing what the before and after school care arrangements are
- Daycare.
- Childcare options
- coordinated daycare for students
- Options about child care
- child care for younger siblings?
- full day or half day for JK/SK?
- Would after school care follow the WCS holistic principals?
- Childcare
- childcare options
- Is there any plans for preschool-age daycare onsite?

- Parent involvement

- What kinds of opportunities are there for parent involvement?
- Parental Involvement opportunities and expectations
- Parent Mentorship/Tutoring opportunities
- how can parents be involved?
- How involved will parents be with WCS after school programming?

- what role will parent's play? Will the WCS have a parent council like other TDSB schools or what kind of structure for parent involvement does WCS envision?
  - how is real parental participation in the programming being taken into consideration?
  - In what ways are you expecting parents to be involved in the startup and running of the school?
  - Role of parents
- **Special Needs students**
    - accommodations for special needs
    - Accommodations for children on an IEP
    - suitability of the curriculum for gifted children
    - Special Ed.
    - Will the school be equipped to deal with advanced children?
    - the inclusion of children with mild learning differences, ie. asperger's syndrome and giftedness...
    - Opportunities for remedial support, if necessary
    - Do you offer help for children with mild learning problems?
    - How will being below grade level affect my child?
- **Transportation Options**
    - transportation especially the idea of a community school bus
    - any transportation support
    - transportation options
    - Busing
    - Transportation options
    - transportation options
    - Transportation
- **School policies and governance**
    - What are school plans and policies regarding amount of homework.
    - I want to know how the school will be managed, what are the checks & balances in operational proceedings. eg: volunteer board, committees, etc....
    - school governance
    - What kind of system is planned for teacher review of students? (i.e. standard report card, or no grading with verbal review, etc.)
- **School/Educational Philosophy**
    - compare and contrast WCS with a standard TDSB school and alternatives such as EAST
    - A comparison of the Whole Child School to a traditional public school.
    - school philosophy
    - How the philosophy and program of the school differs from traditional TDSB programs
    - educational philosophy
    - My understanding is that this school is based on the Waldorf educational framework. As such I'm wondering if the Waldorf tradition of Judeo-christian social/ philosophical view will be part of this model?

- **Equity/Diversity policy**
  - equity policy
  - If there is an equity policy in place, if so, how will it be executed
  - am wondering if in fact there will be a certain percentage of children with “visible minorities” that will be allowed ahead of other children, I do not think this is fair if it is lottery based then a lottery is a lottery, a game of chance. I am hoping that WCS will see that kind of an action could be misconstrued and seen as a form of prejudiced thinking.
  - Diversity plans.
  - What is your policy on dealing with children from alternative families, as we are aware of many queer families like ourselves who are hoping to send children to the Whole Child School
  - how will the TDSB's equity policies be implemented within the WCS?
  - What efforts is WCS making towards implementing a curriculum & policies that are sensitive to the community's diverse Aboriginal, racial, ethnocultural, and faith backgrounds?
  
- **Challenges of being a new school**
  - How likely is a location change for WCS within the next few years?
  - Is there enough room for expansion at the current location?
  - If a location change is needed, will WCS remain in the same area of Toronto?
  - Being a new school within the TDSB, is the school subject to any probationary or trial period with respect to location and its actual existence?
  - Start-up schools issues
  - Being a new school what challenges do you anticipate?
  
- **Student Involvement**
  - information about student involvement and social justice
  - do the children have a part in creating the curriculum? will there be child led meetings at all? school meeting where children work on issues together?
  - Are there additional material that this school with have in order to allow children to pursue their interests
  - Commitment to social justice.
  - Community integration
  
- **Physical space (indoor and outdoor)**
  - physical space for classes
  - What is the condition of the Roden PS building?
  - Are there any existing issues (i.e., renovations) that will need to be addressed?
  - How much space is available for WCS at the school?
  - I understand there is little light in the school room...what is being done to improve the space?
  - discuss school yard changes that will occur
  - how the school will incorporate 'nature' into the curriculum.
  - will there be a separate outdoor area for the smallest children, so they are not around the 'big kids'?
  - How much nature is surrounding the school?

- gardening program?
  
- **Lunch & Nutrition**
  - Lunch program (natural / healthy food / organic)
  - will there be a lunch programme?
  - will it accommodate dietary choices (ie. vegetarian)?
  - lunchroom arrangements and supervision
  - Is there a lunch program?
  - Lunchtime routine
  - Are there enough funds for a snack/nutrition program?
  - nutrition: snacks/lunch
  
- **Miscellaneous Questions**
  - I know that at Waldorf school children start school at the age of 7. Would that be the option at Whole child?
  - Are the age requirements for each grade the same as public school or the same as Waldorf?
  - What will be the extent of fundraising that will need to happen above the usual TDSB norm?
  - How environmentally (toxin-wise) aware is WCS?
  - Your information lists Aboriginal teachings as part of the curriculum. I think it is important that this would be taught by Aboriginal teachers.
  - how the inquiry- based learning will be implemented
  - The types of kids that thrive within the WCS environment vs. those that don't (for example, our son needs lots of structure and routine to feel secure yet he is a very creative and imaginative thinker)
  - How grade 7/8 French intensive work if your child is recently coming out of a basic French program starting in grade 6
  - can we see a mock up classroom?
  - tours of the school where it will be?
  - Anything else to get a better sense of it off paper and into real life experience.
  - Certainty of opening in Sept 2009
  - will there be support for transition for older children (grade 1+) to this new school concept and the move from their originating schools?
  - will there be other opportunities for the parent and children community of WCS to get to know each other prior to Sept 2009?
  - Is there a plan for a high school?
  - I'd like more information about how the school was initiated, the people behind the initiative
  - Will the school have a position on dress code, tv watching, limiting affect of media on children
  - transition to highschool

## APPENDIX TWO

### Additional Comments & Feedback from Survey Respondents (anonymous)

We are very excited to be exploring the WCS as an option for our family.

I hope you will make spaces available for aboriginal children. This is particularly important if whole child becomes as popular as we hope/expect.

As with the school that my child is currently attending, I looked at the environmental and health safety issues that immediately affect my child and the rest of the children attending the school, and was able to make changes that improve both. Of concern to me are the types of plastics, classroom chemicals/cleaners and paint, classroom materials that the children are exposed to. I would be more than happy to offer assistance in this regard to ensure that the children are not unduly exposed to toxins in the school.

We thank the committee for the wonderful work they have done so far!

Looking forward to the information night.

I think you've done a fantastic job of keeping us informed, and I really appreciate all your efforts to create a school community before there's even a school!

As a practicing architect familiar with Waldorf concepts (studied in Germany), I am willing to volunteer my time to teaching geometry/architecture and mathematics to the senior grades. This is something my daughter needs - a right-brain approach to left-brain topics.

I'm impressed with the organization of the committee to date. Thank you for all the information. I recently attended the event at the Withrow Park Clubhouse and had the impression that most people there were those with very young children. So that creates concerns in me that not too many people will be entering their children into Grade 5. I'd also really like to know who the Grade 5 teacher will be.

My children are quite happy in their local school, but I know they would thrive in the kind of environment that seems to be developing for WCS. Is there a chance that this kind of approach might take off and spread to other schools in the city?

Nothing other than that we are very excited about this school, and want to help out in any way that we can to ensure its viability and success. Thank you!

I'm very excited about the WCS opening up (in our neighbourhood!); and, our family enjoyed the recent get-together at Withrow club house - however, there were no introductions/very little communication in the hour that we were there. It would be nice, in the future, to find out a bit more regarding the people involved in the WCS - and have more one-on-one discussion.

Thanks for this opportunity to provide feedback! And congratulations on all the work you have done and what you have accomplished.

I think it is amazing that you got this program open, regardless of whether or not I send my child. I organize the parents for the TOPS high school program and we have been dealing with the Board on moving it, and I know what challenges exist. Way to go!

I am fully willing to work with the school to achieve the tremendous potential that I see is possible. I can aid with my time in the future if needed. I grew up at the Toronto Waldorf School in the 70's and 80's and hope that I can give my children the experience of a tremendous grass roots education in a school that has similar goals for the growth of society.

I have been to a few meetings and the process has been very orderly thus far, for me this has instilled a great deal of confidence in the future success of the school.

Thank you for starting something exciting in the East end!

Will you hold a 1-week summer school or something to that effect to get a feel for the school?

I'm looking forward to information night to better the process and am very excited to learn more about this great opportunity opening up in our area!

I am so excited for this opportunity! And so grateful that the school will be at Roden. It is near to us and in the heart of a lovely community. We are thrilled. Thank you for all your hard work and we look forward to being a part of your school when our son is ready to attend.

thanks for great and prompt communication (email and surveys) if the school does not open in September 2009, we might not be able to wait another extra year as the children get older. I will volunteer at WCS to teach French through singing, dancing and other fun ways.

We are just so excited about this. Can't wait for September!

this school will rock and the area needs it

I went to the first information session and it looked to me like there were a few non supporters, I am a bit worried that this would extend past the meeting I am hoping that the school, parents, and the daycare, will welcome you with open arm and consider that people like myself and my son have the right to education that suits his learning style and my beliefs that you do need to make sure the whole child is educated mind, body and spirit

Well done and congratulations for getting it this far. I am very interested and if some of these questions/concerns can be sorted out, I would feel more comfortable with the idea of going there.

My child is only 1 year old. We want to get a general feeling for the Whole Child School before we begin to explore other options. Another option I might consider is a French immersion program in the TDSB. We are Gestalt Therapists my husband and I so we are drawn very much to your "Whole" approach. This is very much in line with our philosophy.

We LOVE your vision! We've been following you all along. :-) We're keeping our fingers crossed that you won't cut off your initial opening at 3rd grade, AND that we can get in!!! We believe that WCS would be a fantastic match for our children, for their personalities and learning styles. We're glad you've got a site!!! Yeah! As of now, Roden is our home school anyway. Thank you, good luck and we'll stay tuned to your growth!

This has all been so respectfully organized and presented to help us all. Thank you so much. Our family so very excited to participate in the formation of the Whole Child Community. You've already made it feel like so much of a community.

I am very excited about this project.

Loved the get together at Withrow Park! So looking forward to my children being exposed to this amazing approach in education. Would love to help in any way I can.

Would like to join!!

We are very excited at the possibility of our children attending the Whole Child School. Please keep up all of the great work!

I have been fascinated with Waldorf for a few years now. I've been wanting a style of teaching that is more in line with children's development and is more respectful and honors children from where they are coming from. This is why I'm thrilled to hear that there is a Waldorf-style school opening up in the public school system.

I really like the philosophy of the school and it sounds wonderful, but I wonder how hard it will be to follow through.

No. I am really excited that this is happening and grateful to all those who are working so hard.

I'm very interested in the school, encouraged by so much that I hear, I feel grateful to the people who have put the energy and time together to begin the school.

We are very excited about the prospect of sending our son to the Whole Child School.

Not at this time. If so, I will address on the day, Feb 5th. Thank you.

Way to go team! You're doing a great job!

I think you have all done an excellent job at reaching out and connecting with the parents and letting people know what is going on, where you are in the process. Keep up the good work. If there is additional support required that others can help with in the local neighbourhood (we live very close to Roden), please let me know.

Looking forward to the information night.

I have tried on 3 separate occasions to be included in the Whole Child mailing list and have experienced a lot of frustration with not being included

If our children/family is not earthy or granola (sorry, I am using stereotypes) will they feel comfortable/fit in at WCS?

looking forward to the info night!

I didn't see anything about spiritual growth in the curriculum (not specifically religious). Did I miss something?

Would like to see the interior of the school.

I would like more information

I am curious as to how behavioural issues are to be handled in the context of alternative schooling. By definition we're an outlier population.

I wish you all the best in starting your school. I would have been very interested in my son attending if we still lived in Toronto. I enjoy being on your list so that I can keep up with your exciting developments.

Thanks for all your hard work!

Thanks for all your work in making this happen!

I have noticed those teachers who have and Early Childhood Education or formal education in the development of children simply make better teachers. It would be wonderful if more parents felt the way that I did because I would like to make it mandatory for students who are considering a teaching career to first study early childhood and developing. I have entertained a plan to force the TDSB to change the teacher's courses so that there would be no choice but to get an E.C.E diploma first.

Great work on all this - good to see all the hard work paying off! Thanks.

Just want to give my support in any way; this is awesome what you are doing.

Exciting to see all your hard work pay off! Good luck!

Thanks for your time and efforts in putting this together. We are so excited for our child to have this opportunity.

I enjoyed the community get together and at the Withrow clubhouse. Well done! I love the idea of parent participation from the community; I know that this area of the city is rich with creative talent!