The Results and Implications of Fundraising in Elementary Public Schools: Interviews with Ontario Principals

by

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Abstract
A growing pressure to fundraise at the school level in Ontario is a direct result of funding cuts by the Ministry of Education. The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the kinds of different fundraising strategies principals use in select elementary public schools in a southern Ontario large city and to determine the positive and negative results of fundraising. Principals of eight elementary schools were interviewed from high and low fundraising schools. Five included school observation tours. The findings show a positive correlation between student achievement and fundraised amounts and utilization, but that the benefits of fundraising only apply to a small number of students. The findings also show that an equal educational opportunity is not being provided to all students, and that moral, civic and democratic values are being eroded. This study highlights the need for Ontario’s Ministry of Education to fully fund public education.
Acknowledgments

The children that I have worked with in Toronto for over 20 years have always inspired me. Their personalities, sense of wonder and love for learning is endearing. All children, in both affluent and lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods have great potential to flourish and succeed. I thank them for my drive and my commitment towards social justice issues. I hope to make a difference in as many children’s lives as possible.

In the fall of 2010 I took a keen interest in Dr. Trevor Norris’ graduate assistant position that dealt with commercialism in schools. Once hired, I became immersed with research and developed a deep appreciation of the work many scholars had undertaken on this topic. This topic was very much related to fundraising, as schools permitted commercialism into their schools to raise funds. Having worked in the TDSB for the past five years I was well aware of the public school fundraising inequities and how it affected schools and students. It was a topic of personal interest that received full support by Dr. Norris who quickly agreed to be my thesis supervisor. Dr. Norris guided me through my thesis, helped with the conceptual framework, and provided me with many revisions to clarify my study’s findings in the context of our current neoliberal climate. I am very much indebted to him and continue to admire his research and dedication on the topic of commercialism.

Dr. Joseph Flessa was also very supportive of my thesis, providing me with valuable feedback in his role as second reader.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to all students who are or will be enrolled in the public school system!
PART 1 - Does The Public Education System Benefit From Fundraising?

Main Research Question

What kinds of different fundraising strategies do principals use in select elementary public schools in a Southern Ontario large city, and what are the positive and negative results of fundraising?

Chapter 1 Introduction

Public school funding should be made available at the government level to fully support a robust and complete curriculum for all students. Public education is supposed to be democratic, transparent and the great equalizer in which every student is given a high quality education to succeed in a respectful and responsible manner. However, Ontario schools have been grossly underfunded since 1997, originating with the Conservative government of former Premier Mike Harris, and have since taken on additional costs (Social Planning Toronto, 2011, p. 54) creating an increasing need and pressure to fundraise at a time when poverty rates are climbing. “The GTA is now the child poverty capital of Ontario: 50% of Ontario’s children in poverty now live in the GTA, up from 44% in 1997… In the GTA’s suburban Regions the number of children living in poverty is growing at an alarming pace. Peel Region has had a 51% increase in the number of children in poverty since 1997. York Region has had a 44% increase in the number of children in poverty” (Children’s Aid Society of Toronto, 2008, p. 2).

This study that consisted of 8 principal interviews and 5 school observation tours in southern Ontario urban elementary public schools will
demonstrate that the overall benefits of fundraising in public schools do not outweigh the costs. It will show that schools, being public spaces, should focus on teaching and learning and leave the responsibility of school funding to the government. School fundraising is creating a multi-tiered education system where the vast majority of students attend an underfunded school and an elite group of students attend schools that are able to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars. This inequity is a social and democratic injustice because the economic status of a school has a significant impact on how students perform in school. Any shortfall in financial resources due to underfunding by the government should not now or ever have become the responsibility of principals, school staff, parents, students or school boards to make up. In addition, government underfunding has put the public school system in a vulnerable position because of its need for corporate donations, corporate partnerships and philanthrocapitalism (a new way of doing philanthropy, which mirrors the way that business is done in the for-profit capitalist world (Bishop, 2007, p. 1)). This study will provide insight into the short and long term negative impact of these relationships and practices.

The impact of fundraising in public schools is significant. “94.6% of Ontario students attend publicly-funded schools, a percentage that has remained relatively steady since 2001/02” (Quick Facts, Ministry of Education, as cited in People for Education, 2010, p. 2). Ontario’s Ministry of Education funding “is meant to be equitable in order to provide equal educational opportunity for all students” (The Annual Report on Ontario’s Publicly Funded Schools, 2010, p.
26), but there is evidence that Ontario’s public education system is two tiered in terms of school resources because of an inequity between schools in fundraising. The People for Education (2010), an independent parent-led organization, working to improve public education in Ontario’s English, Catholic and French schools, reported that school-generated funds for the 2008/2009 school year for all school boards across Ontario was $592,643,311. The equity issue is that while there are a few schools that collect over a million dollars a year, “other schools collect very little or nothing” (Winsa and Rushowy, 2011, March, p. 1). Fundraising inequity is “raising concerns about the growing inequity between rich and poor schools in the Ontario education system” (Winsa and Rushowy, 2011, March, p. 1). Inequities also exist within schools because not all students can afford student fees, or the numerous products and services offered through fundraising.

The development of an equitable fundraising policy for all students has been and will continue to be difficult. Based on this study’s literature review and results it is nowhere evident that schools and parents share money raised with other schools, which gives the appearance that they are reluctant to do so. In addition, the same results showed that some schools are opposed to limiting their fundraising efforts. Ontario’s former Minister of Education Leona Dombrowsky indicated that fundraising policy development is difficult when she commented that the dollar amount of school-generated funds is “significant”, but “wouldn’t comment on whether the province would ever consider asking rich schools to share with needier schools. “We don’t know how much is being raised
and for what it’s being raised,” said Dombrowsky. “That’s important information for us to have before we consider anything beyond that”’ (Winsa & Rushowy, 2011, February, p. 2). Although Dombrowsky acknowledged that the dollar amount of school-generated funds is “significant”, she did not acknowledge that what it is used for is “significant”. This study will provide information that shows that the use of fundraised money is significant because it correlates positively with academic and athletic achievement. In addition, the study will serve as a guide for fundraising policy development, professional development for staff, and social justice activism.

This study investigates the impact of “school-generated funds” across a few urban public elementary schools in southern Ontario. The research examined and analyzed A) the different fundraising strategies principals have used to generate funds, B) the amounts of money raised and C) the positive and negative results of fundraising. The principals interviewed had a chance to reflect on the fundraising process, their role, and the results of fundraising. Each principal shared their thoughts, observations and any relevant data.

This study is very relevant today because public schools continue to be underfunded at the expense of a true democratic society. In a true democratic society, in the words of the Ministry of Education itself, “every student has the right to attend a school, where they are a qualified resident pupil, without payment of a fee” (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 1). However, the ideal of true democracy in public education is undermined when the Ministry of Education’s Guideline for Fees for Learning Materials and Activities (2011) states that
“school-generated funds” can be used to offer “enhanced or optional programming…or supplementary learning materials beyond the core curriculum” (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 1). Furthermore, since our current neoliberal government would like our education system to be accountable and competitive (Molnar, 2006, p. 622, as cited in National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; CEO Forum on Education and Technology, 1997, 1999; Achieve Inc., 1999), and corporations increasingly view young people and schools as opportunities to profit (Molnar, 2005, p. 71), fundraising in schools has become the norm in attempting to meet growing educational demands (Rich, as cited in McCarthy, 2005, para. 9). These pressures make fundraising implicitly mandatory for schools in an attempt to provide a high quality education for all students.

When developing fundraising policies governments, school boards, administrators, teachers, parents and students will be able to use the findings of this study to inform their discussions and decisions. As an example of the importance of legitimate research, Ontario’s former Education Minister Leona Dombrowsky created new guidelines to address the “new report from People for Education that finds almost 70 per cent of Ontario high schools charge student fees for courses – fees that aren’t allowed under the Education Act” (Rushowy et al., 2011, March 1, p. 1). My study will increase the awareness about the processes, results and impacts of fundraising initiatives. Of particular importance to this study, “In the Toronto public board alone, the top 20 money-generating elementary schools, primarily in wealthy neighbourhoods, collected a total of
$4.4 million compared to just $103,000 for the bottom 20 schools, most in needy areas" (Winsa & Rushowy, 2011, February 28, p. 1). The implications of this type of inequality needed to be investigated and addressed. This study will describe a wide array of fundraising inequities and ethical issues. Results of the study will show that low money-generating schools perform lower academically and athletically, have limited arts, sports and extracurricular activities, lower student engagement, less resources in their library, less school technology and poorer school grounds compared to high money-generating schools. Additionally, allowing private money into the public school system threatens the democracy and equality of the school system, and shifts power and control into private hands. These individuals and corporations usually have their own for-profit agenda, which includes promoting consumer ideology and expanding their consumer market.

Students should not be held responsible, penalized or adversely impacted because their public school is a low money-generating school, and more importantly, no school should even need to fundraise because the overall negative impact diminishes the worth of schools as a public good. It is critical to consider and understand that, other than home schooling or in the case of a family that can afford private schooling, a student is legally required to attend a public school based on their home address and often that school will be a low money-generating school. The Ontario Ministry of Education needs to make education equitable and accessible for all students and not leave schools in a vulnerable position due to lack of funding, because when individual public
schools are forced by economics to make deals with corporations that have their own agenda it creates a “dysfunctional relationship because one group is wealthy and seeking private gain while the other is desperate and needy” (Norris, 2009, p. 51). This study will describe and analyze examples of this dysfunctional relationship.

There is a political agenda for underfunding public schools that subtly invokes the need for funds from the private sector. The hidden agenda for right-wing efforts is that “underfunded public schools fail so that they can eventually be privatized” (Giroux & Saltman, 2008, p. 2). This unspoken agenda is becoming increasingly evident as school-business partnerships gain in legitimacy and school commercial infiltration generates corporate profits while creating inequities for students (Molnar, 1996, pp. 70-71). Education is a “$600,000,000,000 (and growing) market that currently capitalizes more on the “captive audience” of America’s children than it is about education” (Engle, 2001, p. 7). Corporations are interested in schools and school children because they provide profit through branding opportunities, access to a particular demographic group, marketing with limited competition, the opportunity to enlist unpaid student sales staff and the opportunity to have kids nag and pester their parents to buy their corporate product or service. Also of interest to corporations and their quest for profit is the image that is created by building their social legitimacy as benevolent school partners (Norris, 2009, pp. 50-51). For corporations that provide corporate products, services or donations the results are often an appropriation of space, an exclusive agreement, customer and brand loyalty,
sponsored educational material, good public relations and profits, but for the students and the community the results are an unhealthy lifestyle, an unhealthy relationship and the promotion of consumer values (Molnar et al., 2010; Norris, 2011). Examples of the promotion of an unhealthy lifestyle are the marketing to children of food high in fat and sugar (FHFS) and food of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) (Molnar et al., 2008, p.506). In the long-term, unhealthy lifestyles impact personal health and result in extraordinary costs to the public health and social services systems.

As corporations attempt to build lucrative partnerships with public schools, there is also now a growing trend towards philanthrocapitalism as a means of securing additional funding for public schools. “Philanthropy is based on the understanding that tax breaks are given in return for a commitment to use the same resources as or more effectively than government, so it is not unreasonable to ask whether tax exempt activities are living up to their side of this agreement” (Edwards, 2008, p. 85). This is a social justice issue. An important question to ask is whether corporate partnerships and philanthrocapitalism treat the symptoms of underfunded public schools, or do they understand and treat the unjust social complexities, systems and structures that keep and promote the underfunding of schools? Promoting corporate and philanthropist control and power by allowing them to direct tax exempt activity provide them with immediate tax breaks and freedom to operate with less government regulation. These corporate and private parties should not make school decisions because schools belong to the public (all taxpayers and
citizens). Allowing them this role slowly diminishes the power of a democratic government because they will fund what is in their own self-interest as opposed to the public good. Furthermore, a corporate executive “is presumably an expert in running his company— in producing a product or selling it or financing it” (Friedman, 1970, p. 3). “How do these corporations know what’s best for students and schools?” (Norris, 2009, p. 52).

My literature review in fact shows that they do not know what’s best. For example, in August 2011 Scholastic Canada, one of the country's leading publishers and distributors of children's books and educational materials, responded to the Campaign for a Commercial-free Childhood’s three-month campaign to drastically reduce its production and distribution of corporate-sponsored teaching materials. Scholastic agreed to reduce the production and distribution of corporate-sponsored teaching materials by 40% (Campaign for a Commercial-free Childhood, 2011, August, para. 1). Earlier in the year, in May 2011, Scholastic also agreed to discontinue their American Coal Foundation sponsorship of material that promoted coal as a source of energy (Scholastic, 2011, May 13, para. 1). Therefore, it is very important that the government and schools stay vigilant in monitoring corporate-sponsored material, corporate-partnerships and in holding corporations accountable.

Furthermore, there are private foundations that exist outside the school for the purpose of school fundraising. For instance, Toronto schools have approximately “thirty autonomous, private foundations through which they raise funds for the school; none located to date are affiliated with more
marginalized schools. These charitable foundations register as separate entities under the Canada Revenue Agency and are not subject to school board transparency and accountability measures. The impact of their fundraising efforts is not known…If we do not allow schools to collect fees and fundraise will this lead to a proliferation of charitable foundations that exist outside the school boards? How will these foundations be monitored?” (Social Planning Toronto, 2011, pp. 35-36). Fundraising as an alternative to public government funding is very complex. The funding solution needs to be transparent, accountable and equitable. The accountability needs to include equal distribution of money amongst all schools, the assurance that all students will not be charged for any fees related to any and all school activities, and the protection of students and the public good from hidden corporate and neoliberal agendas.

The Ontario Ministry of Education needs to decide whether allowing private money and corporate infiltration into the public school system supports their commitment to provide all students with opportunities to achieve success and that the government’s vision that “educators, students, parents, teachers, principals, schools, boards and the wider community work together in a genuine partnership to ensure good outcomes for all students” (Ministry of Education, 2011, para. 1-2). Having a fully funded public education system is not just about having money and resources for every student in the system to succeed. It’s also about promoting public good, democracy and civic function rather than a corporate culture or “private good designed to expand the profits of investors, educate students as consumers…” (Giroux, 2000, p. 85). A fully funded public
education system is about using democratic principles to truly provide intellectual and social mobility for every student. This can be accomplished through fully funding public schools and allowing them to effectively run without the interference of the private sector's penchant for power and profit. The neoliberal agenda and the global accountability movement if not seriously challenged may pose a threat to the public school system and the future of democracy.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

2 Reasons Why Ontario Public Schools Need to Fundraise

Our current neoliberal government chooses to be business friendly and cater to the wealthy by providing corporate tax breaks (Edwards, 2008, p. 85) and turning a blind eye to tax evasion, which inevitably underfunds social services, including the public education system (McQuaig & Brooks, 2010, p. 140). McQuaig and Brooks, two Toronto social justice activists through their recently published book, “The Trouble With Billionaires”, provide evidence how the rich and powerful in Canada, U.S. and Britain influence economics for their own good and at the expense of society and democracy. As an example, in the United States, President Obama, even after he was challenged by corporate lobbyists, did not follow through with his promise to go after companies that “set up dummy corporations in tax haven countries, then juggle their books so that their profits are shifted to these dummy corporations, which are subject to extremely low rates of taxes” (McQuaig & Brooks, 2010, p. 140). This is a yearly revenue loss of $200 billion (McQuaig & Brooks, 2010, p. 140). Similarly Canada has shown a small amount of interest in going after wealthy Canadians with offshore accounts or who take advantage of tax loopholes (McQuaig & Brooks, 2010, p. 143). Once again, money lost through tax evasion is a loss to social services, such as the public school system.

The rich keep getting richer as they continue to receive significant tax breaks, while the need for public school-generated funds grows. For example, in Canada, former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney disclosed to Canadian tax
authorities a past unreported income from 1995 of $225,000. After his disclosure in 2009 he only paid taxes on half of the reported income without any penalties (McQuaig & Brooks, 2010, p. 141). More recently a Globe and Mail article stated that presently “1 per cent of American households earn as much as the bottom 60 per cent and have as much wealth as the bottom 90 per cent. …Combine low taxes with tax credits, tax havens and tax loopholes, and you’ll come upon a capitalist nirvana where many of the largest corporations pay no taxes at all…. What is true of America is equally true of Britain and increasingly true of Canada” (Caplan, 2011, p. 2). This predicament continues to be justified by the neoliberal agenda that promotes competition. Neoliberals assert that countries need to provide tax breaks to wealthy business entrepreneurs and corporations to keep them in their countries. Rottman explains that because “industrial leaders’ recent increase in freedom to pass through national borders and exploit labour in countries of the global south, federal decision makers of the global north have felt the need to appease these wealthy stakeholders by prioritizing corporate tax breaks over spending on social services. With the resulting decrease in financial resources, schools…and other public service institutions have been forced to cut their operating budgets and compete for diminishing government support” (Rottman, 2007, p. 68). Governments that resist the global market economy culture “are punished by corporate departures, and thus the former have little choice but to capitulate to the latter’s demands” (Hyslop-Margison & Margison, 2000, p. 307). This capitulation to corporate demands is also seen in the Ontario public school system (Norris, 2009, p. 51). “Robertson explains that, "the private
sector has moved from standing behind the throne of power to sitting on the throne itself" (p. 11)" (Robertson, as cited in Hyslop-Margison & Margison, 2000, p. 307). The loss of government power and revenue has resulted in increased fundraising at the school level.

In addition, the ongoing global economic crisis has produced higher unemployment, lower overall corporate revenues, a substantial loss in tax revenues to governments, additional cuts in funding to social services, including public schools, and as a result opened the door wider for corporate predators to intensify their marketing efforts in the public school system. The “economic recession of the last several years appears to have resulted in the intensified corporate marketing efforts in schools, as parents, teachers and administrators welcome “partnerships” that they think may help avoid program cuts” (Molnar et al., 2010, p. 1). Corporations clearly want to expand their market into the schools. This corporate opportunity exists because of our current global financial crisis and a shift by governments to the political neoliberal agenda in order to deal with diminished revenues.

As well, consider that “Canada now spends $13 billion more a year on defence (including the current Afghan training mission) and security than we did before 9/11, the Rideau Institute reported this week. In all, it estimates, 9/11 has cost us $92 billion and the lives of 157 brave soldiers, plus a diplomat, two aid workers and a journalist” (Toronto Star Editorial Group, 2011, September 10). Although this is an example of a federal funding priority, it highlights a global trend that exists at all government levels and the trend is this; while it is very
apparent that there is money available for government priorities, in order to facilitate changing priorities it is usually at the expense of something that a government considers expendable or lower on the priority scale. In the province of Ontario cuts to funding for the public education system means that public education has become a lower priority. All these factors have left public schools underfunded, vulnerable to corporations and dependent on school-generated funds. For example, “School trips and library books are the most commonly identified items for which elementary schools raise money through fundraising activities” (Froese-Germain et al., 2006, p. 12). It therefore follows that fundraising for necessities has become a consumerist solution to underfunded schools. The overall fundraising trend, whereby fundraising has become a necessity to augment declining public funding, is not limited to the geography of this study, but is universal throughout North America (Molnar et al., 2011, pp. 1-3).

However, the fundraising solution is inequitable, restricting freedom and democracy. School resources and opportunities that are dependent upon the monetary results of fundraising means that low fundraising school communities have fewer resources and opportunities, fewer choices to provide an equitable and rich educational experience for their students and eventually results in fewer after school choices for their students as well. The unfairness and inequities imposed upon a low socioeconomic community and school promotes an erosion of rights and privileges that equates to a loss of freedom. When the result of underfunding produces an undemocratic multi-tiered educational experience, it is
obvious that the consumerism solution to underfunded schools promotes consumer pedagogy at the expense of civic pedagogy (Norris, 2011, pp. 168 & 176).

The replacement of civic pedagogy with consumer pedagogy can be seen through concrete examples of how corporations interfere with the public school system by applying a profit and consumer driven agenda. The Frost Centre, a 83 year old Leslie M. Natural Resource Centre in Haliburton, Ontario was initially a publicly run Centre through the Ontario Public Service and served many functions, including environmental education for students. In 2004 the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources closed the Frost Centre to save money. In 2007 the government let a former IBM businessman, Al Aubry, take over the building “with the intention of capitalizing on the environment and arts to create a vibrant summer camp, education system and year-round conference centre” (Watt, 2010, para. 2). His business was not successful. He lost money and couldn’t secure enough capital investment to pay his rent. In 2010 the Centre closed down again and the government is currently looking for a new tenant or owner (Watt, 2010). This is an example of how a business model does not work for a public good. The “closure of the Frost Centre can be contrasted against the emergence of a new type of field trip, run by for-profit corporations with the aim of using schools to secure new customers” (Norris, 2011, p.43).

As well, we can also look at Cadbury, the maker of chocolate bars, as a prime example of how corporations target their marketing savvy towards public schools. Not only does Cadbury attract fundraisers at public schools by offering
their merchandise at a discount for fundraising activities, but they also offer free chocolate factory school tours to grades 4-8 students. Over 15,000 students participate in these tours in downtown Toronto annually (Cadbury, 2011, para.2). In the final analysis though, while it appears that Cadbury is operating with a high social conscience, they are at the same time using child labour to make a profit on their goods, promoting name brand loyalty and creating future generations of Cadbury customers.

Neoliberalism is the liberation of the “free” market systems from government regulation. It includes shrinking the public sector, cutting public expenditure for public schools and other public systems, shifting the tax burden from the wealthy private investors and owners to the individual worker, and the replacement of the concept of “public good” and the power of democratic institutions with the concept of privatization and individual responsibility. For public schools this means fundraising, competition, and the reliance on private donors and corporate partnerships (Martínez & García, 2000; United for a Fair Economy, 2011) and for the private sector this means more opportunities for profit. In fact, the roots of neoliberalism in Ontario can be traced back to the Mike Harris led Progressive Conservative party when in 1996 they introduced standardized testing and in 1997 they took complete control of all monies for education with the passing of Bill 160.

Since the mid 1990’s public schools have become targets of the neoliberal agenda. Michael Apple, a leading critical educational theorist explains, “there is one form of rationality more powerful than any other: economic rationality’, and
underpinning this position is a vision of people (including students) as human capital. The world, he says, is seen as intensely competitive economically, and students, as the future workforce, must be given the necessary skills and dispositions to compete efficiently and effectively” (Apple, as cited in Manteaw, 2008, p.121). Neoliberals have decided that math and reading/language arts are the necessary skills for students and that standardized testing is needed to measure their progress. These decisions have resulted in priority budget allocation to these areas by the Ministry of Education, thus creating a further need for fundraising. It costs a lot of money to execute and maintain school accountability through business model initiatives such as standardized testing. Longstreet explains that the business model of education includes accountability (Longstreet, 2002, p. 2). The United States’ 2002 “No Child Left Behind Act” is an example of a corporate accountability educational model, one which emphasizes standardized testing in math and reading/language arts. In Ontario we have Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) standardized testing in grades 3 and 6 for reading, writing and math. There are also international tests, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Advocates of this business model “say that competition among businesses usually leads to improved products and increased productivity; so why not among schools?” (Longstreet, 2002, p. 2). Molnar (2006) explains, school “budgets are being strained to meet state and federal academic standards and to offer a wide variety of sophisticated and expensive technology to students” (Molnar, 2006, p. 622, as cited in National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; CEO Forum on
These corporate-driven models that have been championed in the U.S. by former President Bush and current President Obama (Giroux & Saltman, 2008, pp. 1-2) drive valuable resources towards standardized testing in these areas and away from a more practical and well rounded application at the classroom level.

The lack of government funding for public schools has created a need for fundraising. Both parents and principals encourage fundraising initiatives and take on an entrepreneurial role that fits and is justified by the neoliberal business model for public schooling. The business model allows schools to fail just like a business (Saltman, 2010, p. 37). The business model does not take responsibility for schools that cannot raise sufficient money to provide a high quality education for all students. Parents “want the best for their kids, including well-resourced science labs and innovative guest speakers to spark students’ imaginations” (The Toronto Star Editorial Group, 2011, p. 1). Also, principals want a high quality education for all their students. “While most principals report they would rather not have to raise funds, 87 percent believe fundraising provides valuable returns” (Krueger, 2007, p. 46). For example, in 2010 over 40% of elementary schools reported raising funds for students to access art programs (People for Education, 2010, p.17). Until public schools are fully funded to allow for a high quality education for all students there will be an implicit expectation to fundraise to make up for the lack of government funding responsibility.
2.1 Equity Issues

Given the Ontario poverty statistics it is unreasonable for the Ontario Ministry of Education to expect or depend on students and parents to fundraise in many schools. The “Number one predictor of risk in education is socio-economic status…About 412,000 children or one in six live in poverty. One in three visible minority children were poor in 2005. Currently there is no policy to protect low-income students and families from high fees” (TDSB Inner City Committee Advisory Committee (Fees and Funding Subcommittee), 2010, December, p. 12). Studies show that fundraising requests are relentless. For example, “Parents are getting more fundraising requests than ever before, and most principals (86 percent) say they have seen an increased number of fundraising activities during the past 10 years” (Krueger, 2007, pp. 47-48). Also, the People for Education’s 2010 report titled “School boards’ school generated funds – from audited financial statements” shows a trend of increased Ontario school board generated funds from school year 2005/2006 to 2008/2009. This trend could mean the gap between rich and poor schools is widening. “In the Toronto public board alone, the top 20 money-generating elementary schools, primarily in wealthy neighbourhoods, collected a total of $4.4 million compared to just $103,000 for the bottom 20 schools, most in needy areas” (Winsa & Rushow, February 28, 2011, p. 1). A per student average analysis shows that the top 20 TDSB money-generating elementary schools collected $418.19 per student compared to $18.47 per student for the bottom 20 schools (Toronto District School Board, 2008-09). This data varies from one school board to another.
Different boards have varying levels of fundraising inequity based on their student communities. For instance, in the York Region District Public Board (YRDPB) the top 20 money-generating elementary schools collected a total of $4.8 million compared to $844,126 for the bottom 20 schools (York Region District School Board, 2008-09). The top 20 YRDSB money-generating elementary schools collected an average of $398.78 per student compared to an average of $168.35 per student for the bottom 20 schools (York Region District School Board, 2008-09). This information is also shown in Table 1 (page 166) - TDSB-YRDSB Fundraising Comparison (2008-2009). Data, such as this, would help highlight geographically the areas with the greatest fundraising inequities.

Using government resources to fulfill neoliberal interests in educational regimes is problematic because corporations have a duty to shareholders, not to students or the public. “In a free-enterprise, private-property system, a corporate executive is an employee of the owners of the business. He has direct responsibility to his employers. That responsibility is to conduct the business in accordance with their desires, which generally will be to make as much money as possible…” (Friedman, 1970, p. 1). The neoliberal priority of making as much money as possible is interfering and influencing public schools. The “contemporary educational regimes have been reformed to give priority to the economic role of students as future producers (and consumers). The resulting common and core curricula embody a concept of equality under which the educational experiences of individual students are more generally interchangeable and their freedom to choose their education is more restricted.
Such curricula also challenge the inclusiveness with regard to cultural diversity that is vital to the public education of a pluralist society” (Manzer, 2004, p. 4). Having people produced in the education system helps corporations profit at the expense of schools and student rights, as students are cherry picked and hired by corporations with little training needed since the student curricula was restricted and focused on corporate interests.

The neoliberal goal is to shrink the public sector, decrease public expenditures, and to privatize every social service for-profit so that the corporate elite can amass more power and wealth. Giroux (2000) argues that central to the corporate agenda “is the attempt to transform public education from a public good, benefiting all students, to a private good designed to expand the profits of investors, educate students as consumers, and train young people for the low-paying jobs of the new global marketplace. And the stakes are high. According to the Education Industry Directory, the for-profit education market represents $600 billion in revenue for corporate interests” (Giroux, 2000, p.85). Privatization of the public school system will create extreme inequality because quality public education is the key to social mobility (McQuaig & Brooks, 2010, pp. 164-165). In fact, with higher public spending you can have both social benefits and economic prosperity.

The impressive social results in the Scandinavian countries have long been noted by those arguing for a stronger government role in correcting the inequality generated by the marketplace in North America…It’s been widely believed that high taxes and social spending may help lots of people, but they destroy the work incentive and thereby reduce everyone’s material well-being…there’s actually little evidence
to support this contention and a lot of evidence to refute it…

social benefits and prosperity – it’s possible to have both.

This is important, since the alleged greater economic

vitality of unequal countries has been a key prong in the

argument justifying extreme inequality.

(McQuaig & Brooks, 2010, pp.165-166)

Until governments decide to truly fully fund public education systems they will not

know the level of social benefits and the impact on their country’s economic

vitality. “The US educational system is one of the most unequal in terms of
distribution of educational resources between schools. These disparities weaken

the nation’s capacity by reinforcing the inequalities in educational outcomes”
(Beese & Liang, 2010, p. 274). Could this also be the case in Ontario due to the

huge fundraising inequities between schools? In contrast, all Finland schools are

fully state-funded, with the exception of a few privately run religious schools,
(Vasagar, 2010, p. 2) and their overall PISA results are the strongest with 5

percent performance variance among their schools. “Parents can rely on high

and consistent performance standards in whatever school they choose to enroll

their children” (Schleicher & Stewart, 2008, pp. 48 & 51). This country is also

prosperous, competitive and has a perceived lack of corruption (Salutin, 2011,
April, p. 4). The lack of tax corruption in Finland provides enough tax revenue to

fully fund schools. Schools are not at the mercy of fundraising and can focus on

teaching and learning.

Lack of extracurricular activity opportunities in the schools due to low

generated funds significantly impact students’ overall success (People for

Education, 2011, p. 3). “Arts and sports programs play a key role in engaging
students in school, yet the majority of elementary schools have no music teacher, and parent fundraising for the arts and sports continues to create inequities among schools” (People for Education, 2010, p. 3). The students who are most negatively affected are the poor and visible minority students (TDSB Inner City Committee Advisory Committee (Fees and Funding Subcommittee), 2010, December, p. 12). In addition to the inequities of underfunding, it also appears that the schools that most need funds are the schools that lose the most instructional time because of the demands of fundraising on principals, teachers and students.

2.2 Fundraising Labour

Fundraising in schools requires labour at all levels of the education system and in every instance where time is used towards the goal of raising funds, time is taken away from what should be the primary goal of educating students. Whether the time used in relation to fundraising is administrative, planning or implementation, the amount of time allocated to fundraising is significant and ultimately results in less time for educational planning, preparation and actual classroom time.

The Ontario Ministry of Education took the time to assess and write a “Fees for learning materials and activities guideline” for all school boards and school board trustees involved in fundraising decisions. For example, TDSB trustees recently had many discussions regarding the placement of Onestop Media Inc. TVs in the schools. The idea was that corporations would advertise on
these TVs and schools in return would generate money (680 News Staff 2011, March 10). This corporate pursuit was rejected by TDSB.

At the school level everyone is involved with fundraising, but most successful fundraising programs begin with the principal taking a leadership role. The principal begins the fundraising process by meeting with school staff to identify and articulate the school’s needs for fundraising, fundraising activities and goals. Krueger (2007) reports that principal involvement is one of the keys to successful school fundraising (Krueger, 2007, p. 46). According to Carrie Bachmeier, a Missouri principal, a principal is responsible for deciding what approach fundraising will take. For example, will fundraising provide a service to the community? The principal is also responsible for recruiting and motivating fundraising participants, including parents, teachers and students. This may involve designing pleasant experiences and prize incentives for top sellers. Important fundraising goals are keeping students safe, limiting the number of fundraisers, using minimal time, and incurring minimal overhead costs (Bachmeier, 2006, p. 1)

Often a principal’s most effective fundraising resource is his or her school council and the time and effort that they can devote to fundraising. For example, Tom Longboat Jr. Public School, a TDSB school, fundraises no money in some years because there is no parent council (Daubs, 2011, para. 3). However, for a number of reasons, it should also be noted that a school council from an affluent or middle class neighbourood is more likely to be a successful fundraising resource than a school council from a working class or poor neighbourhood.
Affluent parents have more flexible hours, cars and networks that help them effectively and successfully fundraise, while at the same time minimizing the time and effort that would ordinarily be expected from teachers and students. They “provide the hidden cultural resources such as camps and after school programmes (dance, music, computer classes, etc.) that give their children an 'ease', a 'style', that seems 'natural' and acts as a set of cultural resources. Their previous stock of social and cultural capital-who they know, their 'comfort' in social encounters with educational officials-is an unseen but powerful storehouse of resources” (Apple, 2001, p. 415). On the other hand, school councils from working class or poor school neighbourhoods do not have the time, resources, or expertise to participate in effective fundraising and in these schools there is more pressure for the principals, staff and students to be directly involved in fundraising projects and to merge or blend the time and effort into their educational programs.

Once a principal has a school council he/she needs to invest the time to articulate the needs of the school and to influence, motivate, coach and collaborate with the parents and staff to maximize fundraising efforts by identifying and limiting fundraising activities to goals that will most benefit the school. The principal’s role is to sell “the physical and emotional benefits of what the fundraiser can do for the school” (Mabry, 2005, p. 3). As an example, the staff and parents at Frey Elementary School in Acworth, Georgia unanimously agreed that funds raised should support school academics. Their school’s ongoing fundraising project was their schoolyard revitalization and it was tied to
school academics (Mabry, 2005, p. 4). This school, similar to Bachmeier’s, limited the number of fundraising projects in order to maximize efforts and ensure fundraising success.

Not only do school councils spend time on fundraising at the school level, but the Ontario Ministry of Education also requests paperwork from the school council in the form of an annual report detailing fundraising activities. This report needs to be submitted to the principal and to the school board. The principal needs to make a copy of the report available to every parent of a student who is enrolled in the school on the date that the report is submitted (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2002, p. 12.5). These reports take time and are valuable from a due diligence accountability standpoint, but constitute another form of labour associated with fundraising.

The Ontario Ministry of Education also permits public schools to have their own private foundation to raise school funds, but the management of a private foundation takes up another segment of time, effort and expertise. A 2011 Social Planning Toronto report “notes that about 30 Toronto public schools have their own private foundations that fundraise — on top of any parent council activities — and that money does not have to be publicly accounted for” (Rushowy & Winsa, 2012, September 12, para. 10).

In general, fundraising labour is often required by principals, teachers, students and parents to organize and run fundraising events or campaigns. This sometimes includes work to attract corporate donations. “The majority of schools reported that fundraising decisions are primarily made by parent groups and
school councils (79 per cent), the principal and other school administrators (76 per cent), and school staff (64 per cent). Students (23 per cent) and school boards were also involved but to a lesser extent” (Froese-Germain et al, 2006, p.12). Time and resources are also spent on advertising and negotiating from a position of vulnerability with corporations. “This is time, money and effort that could be better spent in a way that is more directed to student learning and less about profit” (Norris, 2009, p. 53). The Ministry of Education should prioritize that schools are a public space for learning and not a for-profit space. The Ministry should also stop seeking and allowing private businesses to use schools as a way to expand their market and increase their profits. Additionally, principals should be allowed to make decisions that protect the status of their school’s space as a public space for learning and that resist using the space as a commercial enterprise.

2.3 Commercialism in Schools

When the educational system is driven by corporate interests, instead of developing students’ critical consciousness, corporations succeed in propagandizing people both in and out of schools, resulting in the development of a consumer society (Coll, 1999, pp. 4-6). A consumer society is based on manipulation by corporations and is “skewed towards luxury for the wealthy rather than necessities for the poor” (Chomsky & Barsamian, 1994, p. 290). Furthermore, “a lot of that consumption is artificially induced consumption. It’s not consumption that has to do with people’s real wants. A huge amount of business propaganda…is simply an effort to create wants…The richer countries are the
higher consumers by a large measure, but internally to the richer countries, the wealthy are higher consumers by a large measure” (Chomsky & Barsamian, 1994, pp. 289-290). Are rich schools expectations based on “real wants” or are they based on luxuries? According to a study done by the Commercialism in Education Research Unit (CERU) at Arizona State University, the benefits of company revenue is little. In fact, “Among elementary school administrators, 87.5 percent report that their schools would not be forced to reduce programs if advertising were prohibited” (Linn, 2008, p. 34). Hence, much thought and consideration needs to be given to whether the benefits of commercialism outweigh the costs. Students should have a right to schools that make ethical decisions for them.

There are several reasons corporations are interested in schools. “Advertisers are interested in youth and schools for the same reason that educators are so determined to work with young people; they are energetic, open minded, and still forming their world views…The increasing influence of youth marketing is easy for kids and teens to accept if they have never known any other way” (Norris, 2011, p. 174). The process of branding is easier when it starts in the schools. “Consumerism promotes the process by which the human being is depoliticized, students are reduced to passive spectators, and an active citizenry is transformed into complacent consumers” (Norris, 2011, p. 176). The focus is on training young vulnerable minds to serve the neoliberal agenda. A commercial free school, on the other hand, would allow educators to not be influenced by external agendas and to focus on what should be the true nature of
education; to think critically and base decisions on true democratic values.

Corporations view schools as another market to enter, control and privatize for profit. “Schools are now often seen not only as markets for vendors but as venues for advertising and corporate public relations and as commodities to be bought and sold” (Molnar, 2006, p. 621). Molnar talks about the dangers of marketing in schools. For example, “the most controversial school-based marketing programs are those that promote junk food...constitute a pervasive informal curriculum that sends children powerful health messages undermining the formal curriculum. The growth of junk food marketing practices parallels a significant rise in obesity among young people” (Molnar, 2006, p. 630). In Ontario 19.1% of schools have contracts with Coke and 11.1% of schools have contracts with Pepsi. Corporations exert control by sponsoring athletic programs, extracurricular activities, and educational materials (Froese-Germain et al., 2006, p. 30-32). Corporations also sponsor curriculum materials (Molnar, 2006, p. 632; Froese-Germain et al., 2006, p. 10). These are opportunities for corporations to promote brand loyalty, as well as their own agenda and points of view.

Molnar et al.’s (2010) report titled “Effectively Embedded: Schools and The Machinery of Modern Marketing – The Thirteenth Annual Report on Schoolhouse Commercializing Trends: 2009-2010” examines how embedded advertising influences children’s attitudes and affects them psychologically. “Advertising makes children want more, eat more, and think that their self-worth can and should come from commercial products. It heightens their insecurities, distorts their gender socialization, and displaces the development of values and
activities other than those associated with commercialism. Its greatest advantage is that stakeholders, including children themselves, discount its effectiveness” (Molnar et al., 2010, Executive Summary). This lack of student self-awareness is problematic because students lack the knowledge to be critical of commercialism and its effectiveness. It is up to the government and the Ontario Ministry of Education to acknowledge this research and protect students. Parents also need to protect their own children by redirecting their efforts from fundraising to urging the province to ban fundraising altogether and fully fund public education.
Chapter 3 Conceptual Framework

This study used a social justice and equity conceptual framework that advocates for a high quality education for all students attending a public school. “In Canada, public education has been an important part of our social programs, programs designed to ensure a just society. In many ways, public education was a precursor to our legacy of public, universal programs... Over the last several decades however, public education in Canada, as in other countries, has come under attack. This has, in part, been fuelled by a general push to lessen the role of government and increase the role of business in all facets of public service. Coupled with this is a general push towards valuing the importance of private decisions and advantage over public rights and goals” (Molnar, 2006, p. 3). Ontario public schools are underfunded today because of this attack. Cuts to Ontario’s education budget pressures schools to fundraise and seek corporate partnerships. The instability and conditional funding of private money can easily lead to the control and privatization of public education. School competition for this private funding further empowers corporations to assert their business agenda into the public school system. Corporate involvement in schools is not only a threat to public education, but a threat to a democratic society wherein all students are invested in to become active critical citizens rather than passive and exploited consumers and low paid labour.

Increasing school fundraising to compensate for the lack of government funding is not an equitable solution. For example, “one needs also to recognize that the negative externalities believed to result from commercial activities (e.g.,
student health and consumerism) disproportionately accrue to children and staff in poorer school systems” (Brent & Lunden, 2009, p. 307). Commercial activities can harm poor students the most. Furthermore, Molnar (2003) reports that commercialism in schools harms all students in various ways that include promoting poor health habits (e.g., consumption of sugar-and fat-laden snacks and soft drinks), distorting the curriculum, and eroding critical thinking skills. When one considers both the forces that drive rising school commercialism and the potential outcomes, it appears likely, however, that ethnic minority group students, particularly African Americans and Latinos, are the most severely at risk. Schoolhouse commercialism is allowed to flourish in an environment in which public schools increasingly are starved for resources, and no schools are more in need of funding than those in urban communities where poor and ethnic minority group children are so heavily concentrated.

(Molnar, 2003, p. 371)

In Ontario this means schools in poor neighbourhoods have the potential to be harmed the most by school commercial activity because instead of being able to ask their parent community for funds they are reliant on external private money. For example, Toronto’s Malvern neighbourhood schools find fundraising very challenging due to their low socioeconomic community. Their dominant ethnic groups are Black Canadians and South Asian Canadians, and they also have a fair number of Filipinos. Schools in this area are therefore more vulnerable to corporate conditional funding. Whereas, Whitney Jr. Public School located in Rosedale, an affluent predominately white neighbourhood is able to raise a substantial amount of money through direct parent donations without corporate
involvement (Daubs, 2011, February 28).

In Ontario, school boards’ mission and value statements, such as the TDSB’s, are often published as valuing “each and every student”, “the uniqueness and diversity of our students and our community”, “the commitment and skills of our staff”, “equity, innovation, accountability, and accessibility”, and “learning environments that are safe, nurturing, positive, and respectful” (TDSB, 2011, p. 7). Yet, how can learning environments be safe, nurturing, positive, and respectful if schools are dependent on fundraising and left to negotiate with corporations from a position of vulnerability? It is increasingly clear that a neoliberal government and their agenda do not value these statements as public schools continue to be targeted (Manteaw, 2008, p.121). The neoliberal government demands school accountability through standardized tests. Our current educational reforms and resources focus on doing well in reading, math and science under the global accountability movement to fulfill corporate interests, leaving other programs underfunded. This means schools often have to fundraise for their music, physical education, and art programs and as a result of the inequity associated with fundraising, school opportunities are not equitable and accessible to all students. It is important to note that there is evidence showing school commercialism is harmful to children (Molnar et al., 2010; Molnar et al., 2011; Norris, 2011; Linn, 2008). Of equal importance is the fact that neoliberal educational reforms do not suit or honour the uniqueness and diversity of every student and are viewed by many students and families as damaging, negative and disrespectful.
There are other countries that are not influenced by a neoliberal agenda and ensure social justice and equity for all students and the results are positive. In Finland all schools are fully funded regardless of race or social economic background, and all schools in Finland are achieving standards of educational excellence. “In 2009, Finland scored first or second in all categories among OECD members” (Salutin, 2011, April, p. 6). Finland also boasts a 5% score variance amongst their schools and the fact that all schools are fully funded may be the reason. In Canada the between school differences in student performance is 17.9% and for the U.S. it is 29.1% (Beese & Liang, 2010, p. 269). Perhaps these variances are due to the high poverty schools in Canada and the U.S. We know that “students from all income levels exhibit lower achievement when placed in high poverty schools (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003)” (Beese & Liang, 2010, p. 269). Furthermore, “a child’s performance in school is strongly related to socioeconomic status. Children in families or areas with higher levels of education, employment and income (the major components of socioeconomic status) generally do better in school than children in families or areas with lower levels” (Brownell et al., 2006, p. 4). Therefore because some schools are high poverty schools due to poor fundraising results and the students of these schools would benefit the most from the additional resources that extra funds can buy, not all parents in Ontario can rely on high and consistent school performance results.

In Ontario, schools are not adequately funded and they rely on external generated funds for support. The distribution of external generated funds is
grossly inequitable (People for Education, 2008). Finland also surpasses Ontario in terms of providing personal care to students. “The notion of caring for students educationally and personally is a central principle in the schools. All students receive a free meal daily, as well as free healthcare, transportation, learning materials, and counseling in their schools, so that the foundations for learning are in place (Sahlberg 2007)” (Darling-Hammond, 2009, p. 19). Finland’s investment in schools is not hurting them in other areas as some critics may think. Once again, Finland is prosperous, competitive and has a perceived lack of corruption (Salutin, 2011, April, p. 4).

Taking a social justice and equity approach to education focuses on marginalized students and the wider social issues and concerns. The critical social scientists generally focus on the plight of the marginalized. These social scientists contend that human beings are responsible for constructing forms of life that routinely provide advantages for some, while at the same time penalizing others. Doing something about this state of affairs requires that they move through three phases – enlightenment, empowerment and emancipation…emancipatory advocates make no attempt to conceal their emphasis on wider social issues and concerns. Their concern with social justice prompts them to look for measures that will allow them to combat social ills such as poverty, hunger, racism, sexism, political oppression and various other forms of exploitation.

(Ryan, 2003, p. 55)

The literature shows that the results of school-generated funds are a “social ill” for many students (Winsa & Rushowy, 2011, March; Winsa & Rushowy, 2011, February; Toronto Star Editorial Group, 2011, March; Snider, 2011; People for
Education, 2011; People for Education, 2010; Molnar, 2003; Molnar et al., 2010).

Unless we can eradicate poverty, having a fully funded school is the only solution whether it’s from pooling all cash donations or resources and redistributing them evenly or from holding the government responsible to fully fund all public schools.

In conclusion, Ontario schools are underfunded and the inequity of the school fundraising solution is significant. The public education system should be leveling resources and opportunities for all students in their system through full funding, but they are not doing so because of a lack of funds. Instead, the Ontario Ministry of Education’s inequitable fundraising guidelines allows the inequity between the “haves” and the “have-nots” in schools to increase. This continues to occur despite research that shows that the economic status of a school has a significant impact on how students perform in school.
Chapter 4 Methods

4 Introduction

The research question was designed with a narrow focus for the purpose of gaining current knowledge (Anderson, 1998, pp. 59-70; Leedy, 1993, pp. 36-45) on the topic of elementary school fundraising in the public school system in urban centers in southern Ontario. The study’s focus was from a principal’s perspective on fundraising strategies, utilization of raised funds, and the positive and negative results of fundraising. I was interested in the research question because as a Toronto District School Board teacher I had experienced firsthand the need for fundraising and the struggle it meant for schools that did not have the resources to fundraise. I had also researched the topic and became aware of the positive and negative impacts of fundraising, and developed a strong passion to investigate this subject vigorously through an in-depth study with principals. My objective was to gain new knowledge about how fundraising affects all parties involved, including the analysis of school-partnerships with private corporations.

The basic foundation for this study was to interview the principals of 8 schools, 4 from schools who reported high fundraising amounts and 4 from schools who reported low fundraising amounts, and analyze, assess and compare the results against various criteria. There are several reasons why I chose to pursue the topic from the perspective of the principal; because they are exposed to, most responsible for and more likely to experience the most pressure regarding fundraising initiatives and data at their school. The principal begins the fundraising process by meeting with school staff to identify and
articulate the school’s needs for fundraising, fundraising activities and goals. All fundraising activity usually requires principal approval and they work closely with their school council. “The majority of schools reported that fundraising decisions are primarily made by parent groups and school councils (79 per cent), the principal and other school administrators (76 per cent), and school staff (64 per cent). Students (23 per cent) and school boards were also involved but to a lesser extent” (Froese-Germain et al., 2006, p.12). Additionally the principal has an excellent understanding of fundraising because he/she receives an annual report from the school council detailing fundraising activities (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2002, p. 12.5). Finally, one of the keys to successful school fundraising is principal leadership and involvement (Krueger, 2007, p. 46).

I decided on a sample size of eight principals and their respective schools because I wanted a variety of principal perspectives and experiences from schools that fundraised both low and high amounts of money. A sample size of eight principals was chosen because of time constraints and limited resources.

4.1 Recruitment

Principals were recruited to participate in this study through the Ontario Principals' Council. The Ontario Principals' Council recruitment strategy provided access to all school boards within Ontario and also provided principals from all boards the opportunity to participate in the study. Principal participation was voluntary. Principals were selected based on meeting the sample criteria: 1) Schools needed to be a southern Ontario urban public elementary school, 2) Four schools that raise a high amount of money, and 3) Four schools that
fundraise a low amount of money. Urban schools were selected because “no schools are more in need of funding than those in urban communities where poor and ethnic minority group children are so heavily concentrated” (Molnar, 2003, p. 371).

A consent form (Appendix A on page 184) was used before proceeding with the principal interview and the optional school observation tour. A consent letter is a standard ethical practice outlining the purpose of the study, participant expectations and rights, how the results from the interview will be used, and provides an opportunity for the participant to request a summary of the study’s findings upon completion.

4.2 Principal Interview and School Observation Tour

The principal interview and school observation tour data collection instruments were aligned with this study’s research question. This study consisted of eight principal interviews (see Appendix B for principal interview questions on page 189) to collect information on the different fundraising strategies principals used in their school, and on the positive and negative results of fundraising. The Matrix (Appendix D) was used to divide the interview questions into three subgroups:

1. What fundraising strategies have been used at these schools?
2. How are the funds raised at these schools used?
3. From the principal’s perspective, what are the positive and negative results of fundraising?

Six of the eight interviews were recorded with the principal’s permission and all
interviews were transcribed. I selected the interview method to gather information because it would directly provide detailed information I could not have observed and it provided the opportunity to immediately probe for additional qualitative information. One-on-one confidential semi-structured interviews would be ideal for principals because they would be comfortable to sharing information without hesitation and they are articulate professionals (Creswell, 2008, pp. 226-229). Careful note taking and audio taped interviews were used to maintain information accuracy and credible records.

Five school observation tours were completed with the principal’s permission (see Appendix C for the observation list on page 191) to record the evidence and results of fundraising, and to record any visible signs of school achievement. The school observation categories are: technology, playground, gym facilities, library, cafeteria and vending machines, corporate logos, and school achievement. These categories were based on the variables listed in the Matrix (Appendix D). These recordings expanded and corroborated the interview information collected, and deepened the understanding of fundraising variables.

4.3 Achievement Data

The EQAO results of the selected schools were accessed via the Internet and were used to compare and corroborate student achievement and the utilization of funds information gathered from principals and the school observation tours. Additionally, the scope of this study was to go beyond standardized testing results and evaluate how fundraised money and its utilization impact student learning and achievement in other areas, such as
athletics and music.

4.4 Data Analysis

A matrix (Appendix D on page 192) created specifically for this study was used to ensure key broad concepts and variables were the focus throughout the study, measuring data relevant to the research question. This process added content validity to the study (Padro, lecture notes, April 7, 2011). The matrix was also used as a reference in creating the school observation tour categories and all the tables and figures.

The semi-structured interviews with the eight elementary school principals generated descriptive and in-depth qualitative data on the topic of school fundraising, but also generated quantitative data. The questions were ordered starting with what fundraising strategies have been used, what money amounts were raised, and concluded with a discussion about their views and perceptions on the value of fundraising; positive and negative results of fundraising. Data from the principals was used to determine if any relationship exists between school-generated funds and positive or negative results. Schools with lower fundraising levels were compared to schools with higher fundraising levels in terms of overall academic achievement, number and types of extracurricular activities and participation rates with a focus on teaching and learning, and the promotion of certain values and agendas: democratic and equity values, healthy lifestyle choices, consumer ideology, commercialism and the neoliberal agenda. I selected these areas because the literature review showed that fundraising had a positive or negative impact in these areas. The school observation tour data was
correlated with the corresponding principal interview data.

Furthermore, Ministry tools were used to assess the results of fundraising. The Ontario’s Ministry of Education March 2011 guideline for fees for learning materials and activities was used to determine whether the participant schools were following the Ministry’s guideline. The Ontario Ministry of Education’s School Food and Beverage Policy/Program Memorandum No. 150 was also used to determine if food for sale and food for lunches met policy standards.

The study’s matrix, based on the research questions and the conceptual framework, guided the analysis of data. Quotes from participants were used to elaborate on broad concepts, variables, and themes. Fundraised money results and utilization, school observation tour and student achievement information has been presented in the form of tables (Tables 1-5). These tables have been designed in order to determine whether there is a correlation between fundraised money results and/or fundraised money utilization with student achievement. Tables 1 and 5 compare TDSB and YRDSB fundraised dollars and EQAO scores. Tables 2, 3, and 4 include data from the principal interviews and school observation tours, and can be used to correlate fundraised dollars and utilization with overall school achievement. Table 4 - School Observation Tour was also used to correlate school resources and facilities with school fundraised amounts.

Tables 6 and 7 and Figures A-J present information on fundraised dollars and strategies pertaining to the eight schools in this study, and facilitate school comparisons on many levels. The tables and figures include school grades, number of students and the socioeconomic neighbourhood status of each
school. Figure A – Fundraising Dollars by School was designed to visually show the fundraising disparities amongst schools and highlights the disparities between major fieldtrip money collected from families. Table 7 - Fundraising Strategies & Results provides a detailed breakdown of these strategies and results per school, whereas Figures B to I, Fundraising Dollars by Category provides a visual account of fundraising strategies by category per school. Figures B to I are also merged together in Figure J – Fundraising Dollars by School and Category. Figures A-J and Table 7 are important in the analysis of fundraising themes and fundraising school-partnerships. Table 6 – Individual School Food Table highlights in detail the school-food partnerships detailing the school profit for each category of food per school. The study’s Matrix, Creswell (1998) and Froese-Germain et al. (2006) was used as a resource to create the tables and figures for this study (Creswell,1998, pp. 204-205; Froese-Germain et al., 2006, pp. 30-34).

The discussion and the conclusion following the study’s data analysis takes into account relevant literature to understand the results of fundraising at a macro level, including its relation to student achievement, commercialism and the neoliberal agenda. The findings from this study add and deepen the understanding of fundraising in the public school system. The findings show how funds are raised, how much is being raised, what the monies are raised for and the effects of fundraising. This study also questions and examines fundraising methods from a moral, social and democratic perspective.
4.5 Ethics

This study was approved by the Research Ethics Boards of the University of Toronto and had no funding. Participation in this study was voluntary. All principals on their consent letter (Appendix A) were provided with the email addresses and phone numbers for the Office of Research Ethics, thesis supervisor Dr. Trevor Norris, and myself to answer any questions or address any concerns they might have about the research and their involvement in it. After each principal interview and school observation tour, the interview transcript and school observation tour data was emailed back to him or her to allow for the addition of further information and/or to correct anything that could result in a misinterpretation. All information has been reported in such a way that individual persons, schools, school districts, and communities cannot be identified. Principals were given the opportunity to request that information compromising anonymity be changed or eliminated from the study. Providing anonymity to all principals was established to create a safe and open environment in which they could freely express and comment on the topic of fundraising without fear of any repercussions.

The information obtained in the interview and school observation tour will be kept in strict confidence and stored at a secure location. Only the thesis investigator and the thesis supervisor have access to the raw data collected. All raw data (transcripts and field notes) will be destroyed (via shredding) five years after the completion date of the study.

Upon formal completion of this study, a summary of the study’s findings
was emailed in the form of a report to principals who requested a copy on their consent form. The research results may be published or used to make a public presentation in the future.

4.6 Limitations

The study will have limits in generalizability, as the sample size may not be representative of all schools. Also, any relationships found between variables will be a correlation and not a causal relationship, because of the small sample size and the many extraneous variables that contribute to various impacts. The study may be limited by lack of available or disclosed information provided by a principal, or by the principal’s short tenure as a principal at the school. Also, principals may lack awareness on the topics of school fundraising and commercialism, making it difficult to be critical of the process and impact. Legislation and policy recommendations will favour the principles of democracy, social justice and equity.

This study’s data is limited to the principal’s perspective because no other group, such as teachers, parents or students, was interviewed. Interviewing teachers, parents, and students would have provided additional valuable information, creating a more in-depth and comprehensive study but, due to time and resource constraints, only principals were chosen for interviews. However, it was highly relevant that other research showed principals were an excellent source for information on the topic of fundraising and could comment on the positive and negative results of fundraising.

The analysis of the principal interviews will be correlated with the school
observation tour data (Table 4). However, this cannot be done for Schools #1, #3, and #6 because these principals declined the school observation tour.

The principals’, schools’, and boards’ anonymity are protected in this study, which hopefully encouraged all principals to be open, honest and courageous without the fear of personal repercussions or judgment. However, there may be valuable information that has been concealed in an effort to maintain confidentiality.

Finally, this study did not investigate all field trip fees beyond “major” field trips and the fundraised dollar amounts are approximate estimates by principals, and certainly not all inclusive of all the funds raised by the school.
Chapter 5 Conclusion

The literature on fundraising, when critically reviewed, exposes realities and a political agenda for the future of public education. On the one hand the economic crisis has significantly reduced the funds available for public schools. On the other hand, whether willingly or not, governments are increasingly underfunding public schools with the full knowledge that fundraising will increase at the school level, the private sector will become increasingly involved in public schools through funding issues, and that equity issues previously not addressed will continue to grow. Part 2 is a presentation and analysis of data collected from 8 public elementary schools across various school boards in southern Ontario. It is important to note that many principals were extremely interested in the topic of fundraising, and were willing to participate during their summer vacation. In fact, many offers to participate had to be declined because the sample size of 8 principals was met fairly quickly, indicating a high level of interest and concern by principals on the topic of fundraising. Part 2 will describe and assess the positive and negative results of fundraising as it applies to equity.
Part 2 – Results of Study

Chapter 1 Introduction

The expectation from the Ontario Ministry of Education is for schools to fundraise, even though fundraising creates educational inequities between schools and within schools. This inequity is in opposition to the Ontario Ministry of Education’s funding goal, which “is meant to be equitable in order to provide equal educational opportunity for all students” (The Annual Report on Ontario’s Publicly Funded Schools, 2010, p. 26). While there are benefits to fundraising, which will be discussed in greater detail later, there is a disparity in benefit between schools based on their ability to fundraise as well as to the actual amounts raised. The Ontario Ministry of Education, in direct contradiction of their intent to provide equal educational opportunity to all students, supports this disparity by stating, “When schools or school boards choose with the support of the school community to offer enhanced or optional programming, parents may be asked to contribute resources in the way of time, money or materials to support these programs or activities” (Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p.1). By allowing and encouraging individual schools, through fundraising, to enhance or provide optional programming to their students, schools in affluent or higher fundraising neighbourhoods are able to offer their students a greater educational opportunity over those in poorer or lower fundraising neighbourhoods. This study shows a positive correlation between fundraising amounts and academic achievement. This supports the literature review finding that the “Number one predictor of risk in education is socio-economic status...About 412,000 children...”
or one in six live in poverty. One in three visible minority children were poor in 2005. Currently there is no policy to protect low-income students and families from high fees” (TDSB Inner City Committee Advisory Committee (Fees and Funding Subcommittee), 2010, December, p. 12). There is also no protection from dependency on school fundraising. This study shows that the results of fundraising widen the gap between the rich and poor; there are fewer opportunities available to poorer student populations, resources for them are inferior and lacking and as a result their overall academic and athletic achievements are lower.

The scope of this study includes 8 public elementary schools from large urban centers in southern Ontario across a various number of school boards. All data in table and figures are being presented in the order that the data was received from elementary schools #1 to #8 and not in a lower to higher fundraising order.

The controversy surrounding fundraising has been growing and while there has been much reported and written regarding the topic, there seems to be a chasm between what the suspected and actual results of fundraising are. We know that schools in affluent neighbourhoods are able to raise significantly larger amounts of money than schools in lower income neighbourhoods. We also know that there are no policies in place to even the playing field between rich and poor neighbourhoods. However, what we don’t know is the full extent of how funds are raised, how much is being raised and what the monies are actually used for. All of these facts were confirmed recently when Ontario’s former Minister of
Education, Leona Dombrowsky, commented that the dollar amount of school-generated funds is “significant”, but “wouldn’t comment on whether the province would ever consider asking rich schools to share with needier schools. “We don’t know how much is being raised and for what it’s being raised,” said Dombrowsky. “That’s important information for us to have before we consider anything beyond that”” (Winsa & Rushowy, 2011, February, p. 2).

The results of this study answer Dombrowsky’s questions by showing how funds are raised, how much is being raised and what the monies are raised for. However, this study goes much further than just answering the former Minister’s questions. It also shows the effects of fundraising inequities and why policies should be implemented to assure all students have an equal opportunity. Of equal importance to these immediate results, this study also questions and examines fundraising methods from a moral, social and democratic perspective.
Chapter 2 Fundraising Disparities

2 Fundraising Amounts Between Schools

Similar to the findings from the People for Education’s 2010 report, this study found significant gaps in fundraising dollars between schools based on school neighbourhood and fundraising ability. Previous research has shown that the top 20 money-generating elementary TDSB schools, primarily in affluent neighbourhoods, collected a total of $4.4 million compared to $103,000 for the bottom 20 schools, the majority in needy areas (Winsa & Rushow, February 28, 2011, p. 1). This is an average of $418.19 per student for the top 20 TDSB money-generating elementary schools versus an average of $18.47 per student for the bottom 20 schools (Toronto District School Board, 2008-09). This fundraising disparity is consistent across other Ontario school boards as well. The results of this study showed that the top four money-generating elementary schools collected a total of $567,630.00 compared to $45,308.00 for the bottom four schools. The top 3 money-generating elementary schools collected $190.52 per student compared to $37.76 per student for the bottom four schools (School #7 was excluded from the student average because their number of students was not reported in this study). A quick snapshot of the fundraising disparities can be seen in Figure A – Fundraising Dollars by School.
These fundraising disparities are not surprising, and mirror the People for Education’s report.

2.1 Principal Comments on Fundraising Disparities

All eight principals reported that it is not equitable that some schools can raise more funds than others. School Principal #6, whose school is located in an affluent neighbourhood, said,

It’s not equitable because we are a public system. It should be as equitable as possible, but it’s not...
equitable. Kids in low socioeconomic schools should derive the same opportunities in a perfect world as kids in middle or high socioeconomic schools. Through school fundraising the rich kids are maintaining a level that they are already getting at home. In a perfect world all fundraising would be spread out equally. It’s about kids and equitability. Parents who don’t work have the time to fundraise and other parents who work don’t have the time and effort. They are exhausted.

(Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011)

Principal #5, whose school is also located in an affluent neighbourhood had similar comments. “No. It’s not [equitable]. Our kids already get lots of stuff after school, such as scouts and soccer. They’ve got all sorts of stuff. Plus we are able to provide them with all sorts of other opportunities and some schools have nothing. They don’t have a community centre. They have nothing. It’s not fair” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). School #5 is attached to a community centre and the students have access to a swimming pool and an additional gym.

Principal #2, whose school is located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood explained, “it is not fair that some schools are able to raise many more dollars than others – it only stands to reason that the big fund raisers can provide more opportunities and experiences for their students compared to the smaller [fundraising] schools” (Principal #2, interview, July 13, 2011).

The extra funds raised by affluent schools were used in various ways and provided many benefits. Funds were used for schoolyard revitalizations, sports academies, transportation, technology, books, musical instruments, sports equipment, field trips, extracurricular activities, special school guests that help teach the students, professional paid school performances, and other items.
Also, fundraised money frees up the school budget to make certain purchases that the Ministry of Education doesn’t allow with fundraising dollars. Principal #1 explained, “if some of the money we raised through fundraising went towards transportation, and I would typically spend $2,000.00 to $2,500.00 on transportation, then there’s $2,500.00 that I have in my school budget that I can spend on something else” (Principal #1, interview, July 12, 2011). This is a loophole that schools can use to purchase textbooks and other items that are not permitted with fundraising dollars. All principals agreed that many of the items purchased through extra funds do increase student achievement.
Chapter 3 Fundraising; Exclusions and Dignity

3 Introduction

Any direct cash request a teacher or school makes to a student or parent has the potential to exclude students and affect dignity. Cash requests relate to a variety of events, such as field trips, school fees and in some people’s opinion pizza lunches and anything that relates to money. Even a cash donation to the school can exclude a family or affect their dignity because some schools advertise and acknowledge a particular family’s donation by placing the family name in a prominent school location. Schools #8 and #5 have this school donation protocol.

3.1 Direct Cash Request for Field Trip

Requesting cash from parents for a “major” field trip is the most unacknowledged fundraising strategy, but generates the highest amounts of money. Direct cash requests for “major” field trips create exclusion between and within schools. Figure A – Fundraising Dollars by School shows the differences in money collected for “major” field trips across the eight schools in this study. School #6 collects the most money for “major” field trips. They collect a total of $105,200.00 from parents to cover the costs of a Quebec City field trip, multiple ski trips, and music camp. Conversely, School #2 collects no money for “major” field trips because they can’t afford to participate in any.

There are five “major” field trip categories. These categories are:

1. Schools do not have any “major” field trips due to cost. This is School #2.
2. Students do individual fundraising to defray the cost of their own “major” trip.
Schools #1, #3 and #6 fall into this category.

3. Students fundraise as a team, with every field trip participant participating and pooling all the money together to help every student equally. Schools #4 and #8 fall into this category.

4. Students fundraise with some of the proceeds benefiting all students and some extra individual fundraising benefiting his or her own personal trip expense. School #5 falls into this category.

5. Students do no fundraising to defray the cost of a “major” trip. School #7 falls into this category.

In some instances, where the cost of the field trip is reduced and/or a parent informs the office he/she cannot pay, the principal will pay the difference out of the school budget, such as School #7, or from money raised through fundraising, such as Schools #5 and #8. However, not all parents are aware that field trips can be partially or fully subsidized, or that payment can be made at a later date. Because of this some students do not participate in “major” field trips. Principal #8 explains, “That’s kind of a slippery slope. Like if we say, “If you don’t have money let us know” then we'll have a hundred phone calls saying, “I don’t have the money”. However, we have parents who do come in and say, “My husband lost his job. I lost my job. I can’t afford…” and then [the school will help]” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). Even though the school’s community is affluent, Principal #8 added, “You would be surprised some people in this neighbourhood are financed to the gills” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). Therefore, it is important to note that exclusion is taking place across all
socioeconomic neighbourhoods.

Many variables affect the ability to fundraise for “major” school trips, such as student population size and the socioeconomic status of the school neighbourhood. The principal at School #7 does no fundraising in addition to directly asking individual parents for money for their child’s field trip. Their grade 6 camp field trip has a participation rate of 65% and the grades 7 & 8 Ottawa trip has a participation rate of only 7% due to cost. These trips are extremely expensive for this principal’s parent community. After this principal’s school completes fundraising for their yard revitalization project he/she plans to look at ways the school can fundraise for “major” trips, especially since her/his school camp trip will triple in cost because the school will no longer meet the school board’s new “needy school” criteria set for the 2011/2012 school year. This principal is concerned that fundraising will be challenging because of the school’s large student population. “It’s a lot of fundraising to raise money to make a significant difference in terms of cost for those kids. So even with the fundraising I don’t think it’s going to make a big difference in that many more kids going. A few more will go, but I don’t think it will be a big difference” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). This shows that even a school’s size can create fundraising inequities and in this case it’s compounded by the school’s low socioeconomic neighbourhood. School #2, despite having a smaller school population, cannot rely on fundraising for “major” school field trips either because of the low socioeconomic status of the school neighbourhood. They do not participate in any “major” field trips. “We tend not to charge more than $5.00 per
trip. As such, big ticket trips, such as the ROM or the art gallery are not feasible” (Principal #2, interview, July 13, 2011). This example highlights the inequity and injustice that low fundraising ability produces because there are other schools that did not consider the ROM or the art gallery “big ticket” trips.

There are several schools in this study that tried to encourage and help students participate in a “major” field trip through fundraising. This can be viewed as both an inequity and as a learning opportunity. Except for Schools #2 and #7, all schools do additional fundraising for trips in addition to directly asking individual parents for money for their child. While some schools do it as a group (Schools #4 & #8), such as having students babysit at School Council meetings and serve food at a Boston Pizza restaurant (School #8), other schools have their students do an individual project for fundraising, such as selling poinsettias (School #3), chocolate bars (Schools #1 & #5), and QSP magazine subscriptions (School #6). Students whose parents can afford the trip cost have the luxury of not participating in individual fundraising work. While fundraising to help yourself and others can be a powerful exciting experience, entrepreneurial, team building and provide leadership and ownership skills, it can also create pressure to sell, feelings of being different and feelings of inadequacy. These negative effects can be especially true for those students who have to fundraise for their own trip while knowing that students who do not have to fundraise are aware of their socioeconomic family differences. For instance, School #6 publishes top seller student names in their school’s newsletter. This may be adding to the pressure to sell and exposing students who may need to sell due to their family’s financial
situation. The fundraising process and results can also be inequitable for students. For example, parents who own a business with a reception area might purchase a lot of QSP magazine subscriptions while other families have no need for them.

It is incomprehensible why the Ontario Ministry of Education permits field trips to be potentially eligible for fee charges (Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 4), given the inequities of student participation within and between schools. The Ministry of Education’s 2011 “Fees for Learning Materials and Activities Guideline” is full of contradictions. For example, one best practice that is recommended, but not enforced, is that school boards may consider:

- “Creating a central fund or subsidy program to support the full participation of students in activities regardless of economic circumstances;
- Implementing a confidential process to support full participation of students regardless of economic circumstances;” (Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 4)

This recommendation is very challenging for schools to implement. For example, Principal #8 does not advertise that they will accommodate parents who ask for help, but they are prepared to do so if a parent asks for help. In order to provide this help the principal charges an extra dollar for the student school agenda and rounds up trip costs to a dollar amount (example, charging $20.00 instead of $19.50) so that extra funds can be generated to help students go on a field trip. The extra funds generated as a result of these practices usually generate around
$1,500.00 annually. Although this is a creative and seemingly harmless way to generate money, this practice is in violation of one of the Ministry of Education’s best practices. “Fee amounts should reflect the actual cost of the service or materials being provided to the student” (Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 4). It is also a violation of the “IV. Accountability to the School Community” guideline (Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 5).

Principal #7 feels the same way as Principal #8 about schools advertising their ability or responsibility to fully fund a field trip. When asked if some students do not go to camp because of the cost, the response was, “Oh, for sure and if they approach us we pay for it. I just go through the school budget and pay for it. I can’t go and advertise it, don’t worry just come, we’ll pay, but people do approach us and we pay” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). For the Ottawa trip last year about $3,500.00 was used out of the school budget to help with the costs of the 7% of students who participated. It is worthy to note that while only 7% of School #7’s grades 7 & 8 students went to Ottawa due to cost, 33% of School #6’s grades 7 & 8 students went to Quebec City. This difference is due to the socioeconomic variance between the two school neighbourhoods.

Principal #7 said that for a large school it is easier to subsidize field trips due to a larger budget. “Even at my previous school [a much smaller school] there is no way I could do that with my budget. The budget came from parents raising money but in a big school you have a bit more flexibility and that’s why too we could subsidize the kids under the table but we couldn’t put it open and say this is what we do. You can’t afford, we’ll take care of it because we’ll get a
lot of people. There are many people who do pay for it who really can’t afford it either. That’s the thing” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). However, Principal #7 said that if she/he advertises that the school budget will pay for the trip he/she would receive too many requests for help, yet is aware the field trip cost is an economic hardship for their school community.

In affluent schools parents are quite generous and voluntarily give extra money for the small trips so that every student can participate. Principal #5 said, “We are an affluent community and we are very conscious of the kids that can’t afford it and we always try to make sure that they get stuff and we have really generous parents. We will have a parent, say the fieldtrip is $15.00 or something, and they will say, “Here is $30.00. We want to make sure every child in the class goes”. They are really generous” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). This principal also said, “We have some very generous parents that will come in say “I would like to give you a thousand dollars to spend whatever way you wish” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). This money is very helpful in helping families who need the field trip cost subsidized or paid for.

Schools in affluent neighbourhoods, Schools #5, 6, and #8, collect more money for “major” field trips compared to schools in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods. For instance, School #6, a school in an affluent neighbourhood with 360 students in grades 7-8, collected $105,200.00 from their parents for “major” trips, while School #3, a school in a lower middle socioeconomic neighbourhood with 385 students in grades JK-8, collected only $8,848.00 from their parents for “major” trips. Note that School #7, a school in a low
socioeconomic neighbourhood in Figure A (page 53) – Fundraising Dollars by School shows a high dollar amount for “major” field trip fees, but this is due to their very large student population. School #2, located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood school collected nothing for “major” field trips because they do not participate in any due to cost.

It was beyond the time constraints of this study to investigate all money collected for all field trips. There was no data collected on trips that did not cost a significant amount of money, but it would be reasonable to assume similar findings. For less expensive trips School #4, located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood, “do small fundraising things. It usually goes towards school trips. Like they go to medieval times. The grade 4’s as part of their Middle Ages study. So they do some fundraising for that. That’s just to offset the costs” (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011). This is separate from “major” field trips and is organized by individual teachers for their own classroom.

3.2 Music Fees, Program and Instruments

The cost of running a music program is challenging. Many schools had to fundraise to purchase and maintain their music instruments, and a couple of the schools found ways to preserve the longevity of their music instruments. Of the eight principals interviewed six principals made comments about their music program or instruments. Located in an affluent neighbourhood, School #5’s School Council has continuously provided them with money for their music program. School #6, another school located in an affluent neighbourhood, generates a yearly amount of approximately $2,500.00 from running two school
music concerts to help fund and maintain their music books and 300 music instruments. They also charge each student a $5.00 fee for their music book. Furthermore, this school is unique in that it collects $625.00 per top music student for a music camp field trip. Last year 8 students participated in this music camp trip. On curriculum night they also invite a music company that offers parents the option of renting a music instrument, at a cost, for their child. Parents who rent a music instrument for their child indirectly contribute to the school’s music budget by reducing the wear and tear on school music instruments. Needless to say, School #6 has an extremely strong music program. School #8, another school located in an affluent neighbourhood, is given money by their School Council to assist with music program funding. Last year their School Council gave the music teacher $6,000.00 to help fund the music program. This school has enough music instruments for every student and charges a music instrument fee of $40.00. If a student uses his or her own personal music instrument he or she does not have to pay the $40.00 fee. Overall the message was that music instruments are very expensive to purchase, maintain and replace.

The schools located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods had few music instruments and resources to support their program. Schools #1 and #2 from low socioeconomic neighbourhoods did not make comments about their music program or instruments. School #3, located in a lower middle socioeconomic neighbourhood expressed concern over their music program. “My school would not be able to afford music instruments if we had to fundraise for
them because we probably couldn’t raise the money to purchase the music instruments...we don't have music instruments as a whole” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). School #4, a school located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood, a couple of years ago had a dance-a-thon to raise money for music instruments. The event was surprisingly successful, raising about $2,250.00. School #7, located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood has enough instruments for only 25% of the student population and has found a way to make the best of the situation. “There is basically an instrument for every two kids. We semester music. They do instrumental music for half a year and they do vocal music for the other half year. Because of that, music instruments go a lot further” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). This particular principal said the number of instruments available could be afforded because of a big budget due to their large student population. He/she also commented that the school is better off compared to other schools in terms of music instruments. Clearly principals do not have a sufficient school budget to purchase and maintain music instruments and books for every student.

3.3 School Fees for Professional Performances

Professional performances are valuable but expensive. Schools pay for these performances through charging fees and other fundraised money. The schools located in affluent neighbourhoods provide their students with more professional performances than the schools located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods. This disparity is due to fundraising ability and results. Principal #1, #4, #6, and #7 made no comments about professional performances for their
school. School #2, located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood uses some of their fundraised money for one performance a year. One year their Student Council Fundraising Committee decided to pay for a school performance on bullying (Principal #2, interview, July 13, 2011). School #3, located in a lower middle socioeconomic neighbourhood used fundraised money last year to pay for theatrical productions for the whole school. Every year each teacher at School #5, located in an affluent neighbourhood and through the use of fundraised money, has the opportunity to select an artist for a half-day program for their classroom. Additionally, these teachers decide on a performance every year for each grade division: primary, junior and senior; for example, Little Red Theatre for the primary students. Each of these three divisions has at least one or two performances a year. School #8 charges parents $25.00 for the arts package.

So I’ll charge $25 for the whole year and that includes three arts packages, like three things in the arts package. So usually there is a performance that comes in. Usually they’ll be a dance element. So we’ll have a dancer come in and teach the kids to dance and sometimes there’s a music element or art. Sometimes we’ll have an art gallery come in. So we’ll have three things for the kids and we charge parents $25 for the year at the beginning of the year and that ends up being a little bit of a fundraiser but it’s not meant to be. I need to have a little bit extra there for the parents who don’t pay. (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011).

Again, it’s important to note that even in an affluent school some parents cannot afford the school fees. In this case the principal was willing and had the ability to
charge parents who do pay a bit more to cover the fees of parents who do not pay.

3.4 Scientists in School Fees

Scientists in School are a charity dedicated to teaching science to students in grades K-8 through hands-on discovery. Schools #2, #6 and #7 have not used scientists in the school, but Schools #1, #3 and #8 have used fundraised money to pay for scientists in the school. Every year at School #5, located in an affluent neighbourhood, each teacher has the opportunity to select a Scientists in School program for a half-day for their classroom. This school uses fundraised money to make this possible.

Principal #4 does not favour Scientists in School and thinks it’s too expensive. In fact this school recently stopped the use of Scientists in School programs.

This year was the smart boards. Before they used to pay for Scientists in School to assist the teachers and I stopped that because I felt the teachers were allowing the Scientists in School to do the curriculum…. I stopped it because I felt that the teachers were allowing the Scientists in School to do their teaching for them, and the teachers did not cover/follow-up on the full curriculum expectations. It was expensive and the Council was supporting it. So I stopped it…. Mad Science too… they try to get into the schools too and it’s expensive. Maybe for something special for like a particular concept that’s really hard to teach but teachers can’t expect that then to be the lesson and base marks on that and do little else.

(Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011)
These comments highlight both the perceived need and cost of Scientists in School. By eliminating the spending on Scientists in School it made funds available for smart boards. It is suspected that if this principal had an unlimited fundraised budget he/she would want both smart boards and Scientists in School and would talk to the staff about the appropriate use of Scientists in School.

3.5 Student Supply Fees

The more a school can charge in student supply fees, the more it allows the school budget to be freed up for other things. The most common student supply fee is the student agenda fee, which is surprising because the agenda includes valuable school information and is endorsed by the board. In this study only four schools charge beyond the cost of a student agenda fee and three of them are affluent schools. School #8 charges an extra dollar for every school agenda sold. Some of the teachers of School #5 charge $5.00 to do a special project and School #6 charges a variety of school supply fees, such as a music book and a French cahier fee.

In contrast, schools in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods charge fewer supply fees and fees that do not even cover the cost of the item. For example, Principal #2, whose school is located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood, said, “We do not ask for money for school supplies. The only money we ask for is at the beginning of the school year and that is for a student agenda. We ask for $5.00. It actually costs the school approximately $7.00 per agenda” (Principal #2, interview, July 13, 2011). This is unfortunate on many levels, especially since this school’s budget is crucial because they only fundraise about $6,200.00 a
Principal #3, whose school is located in a middle socioeconomic school, is not sure about the amount of student supply fees teachers charge parents. He/she said, parents “subsidize additional activities in the classroom, which I tell the teachers not to” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). Therefore, it is difficult for principals to be aware and track all fundraising activities in their schools.

### 3.6 Loss of Dignity

Students, their parents and schools who do not benefit from fundraising are excluded and may experience a loss of dignity. There are Ministry of Education guidelines to protect against loss of dignity, but unfortunately there is no accountability and nothing is enforced. The “Inclusive Education” guideline states:

- Each student should have an equal opportunity to benefit from the education system without being required to pay a fee. Students must be able to participate in school activities and access resources regardless of personal financial barriers.
- School board fees policies should address financial hardship and support student participation in activities regardless of economic circumstances.
- The dignity of every student and parent should be honoured in the school fee collection process, collection methods afford reasonable expectations of privacy for students and parents; and a respectful practice for discreet identification of students/parents who may be experiencing financial hardship is clearly communicated.

(Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 3)

This study showed that these guidelines were challenging to follow. Charging for field trips and encouraging students to fundraise to completely fund or help fund
their own school field trip violates the “Inclusive Education” guideline set by the Ministry of Education. When schools or classroom teachers arrange for individual student fundraising and/or publish “top-seller” student names in newsletters, such as School #6, it is not respectful or discreet. Publishing top seller names identifies families experiencing financial hardship. Principal #6, whose school is located in an affluent neighbourhood, said, “There are about 120 students who participate in the Quebec City field trip. The cost is $725 per student. Less than half of these students participate in the QSP Magazine fundraiser to augment their money for this year end trip. According to the teacher who runs the QSP fundraiser, only about 50 students per year participate in it and they raise anywhere from $5.00 to $200.00” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). It is highly probable that these students and their families will feel a loss of dignity due to their individual fundraising need. Students who can’t afford to go on the field trip despite the fundraising will especially experience a loss of dignity.

If the Ministry of Education guidelines were being followed it would mean that, with parent consent, all students at a school would participate in a school organized field trip and that students at all schools would participate in the same field trips respective to their grade. However, the Ministry of Education has created a loophole for affluent communities by allowing for enhancements to education i.e., everything that is fundraised for is called an enhancement. Enhancements include anything “beyond what is necessary to meet the learning expectations for a particular grade or course” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 2), and includes program enhancements and field trips. To
permit and condone fundraising for educational enhancements creates and promotes opportunity inequities in the public school system for students. This study showed that enhancements contribute to student achievement and that students of affluent school neighbourhoods outperformed students of lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods.

Beyond the impact of fundraising on student achievement, some students never participate in fundraising activities due to lack of funds and these students may feel excluded. “Sometimes it [fundraising] is an inequitable process because not all the kids have as much money as other kids. So then you know, you have some kids that come to school they are buying this. They are buying that. Whatever is being sold. They buy The Lunch Lady lunch every week and then there are others who don’t participate ever because they don’t have the money” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). Fundraising therefore creates financial division and hierarchy even amongst students in a school.

There are similar findings in affluent schools. Principal #8 said some students at the school never have a pizza lunch because their families can’t afford it. If they know this then the student can have pizza without paying because there is always extra pizza (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). The parents at School #5 are very concerned about the inequity of fundraising. Principal #5 said, “We are an affluent community and we are very conscious of the kids that can’t afford it and we always try to make sure that they get stuff and we have really generous parents” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). However, the reality is that school offices are not aware of everyone’s financial
situation. Moreover, when parents do come forward to share their financial challenges they may experience a loss of dignity, especially since the process is not anonymous.
Chapter 4 Fundraising Costs: Parent Council, Time, Effort and Money

The fundraising process takes the focus off classroom learning. Fundraising requires a lot of labour at all levels and disrupts and takes time away from instructional time. This study provided excellent examples of actual time involved in running a fundraising campaign and revealed the importance of having an active and cooperative Parent Council. It also demonstrated that some purchases made through fundraising incur ongoing costs that the school board is not responsible for.

The School Council, also known as the Parent Council, is critical to school fundraising and has the potential to be difficult and controlling. The more experienced, networked and active a School Council is the less that time demands are made on the school staff. Table 7 (page 176) - Fundraising Strategies & Results provides a breakdown of strategies the School Councils used last year and how much money their strategies generated. Schools #1, #2, #3, #4 and #7, located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods generated zero or little money through School Council run fundraising events. For example, School Councils #2 and #7 generated no money, School Council #4 generated $1,500.00 and School Council #3 generated $2,000.00. In contrast, Schools #5 and #8, located in affluent neighbourhoods relied heavily on their School Council to run fundraising events and raised large amounts of money. School Council #5 generated $35,200.00 and School Council #8 generated $34,000.00. This study’s findings support recent literature on parent council fundraising. “Sarah Deveau, the Calgary-based author of Money Smart Mom: Financially Fit
Parenting, says school-year costs can vary widely for parents, depending on the ages of their children and whether a school has an active parent council. Some councils that are skilled at fundraising can fully subsidize team uniforms and field trips, while others leave parents to pay those costs” (Bascaramurty, 2011, para. 13). Table 3 (page 167) - How Money is Spent from Fundraising illustrates the utilization of funding raised through fundraising. When School Councils are able to pay for things it not only helps parents and students, but it also helps to free up the school budget for other things. “In fundraising if then I do not have to use school money then I can use my school budget for other things. For example, if some of the money we raised through fundraising went towards transportation, and I would typically spend $2,000.00 to $2,500.00 on transportation, then there’s $2,500.00 that I have in my school budget that I can spend on something else” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). In the quoted example the principal, by applying a fundraising allocation strategy, is able to reduce the load on the school budget while adhering to fundraising policies and use the additional $2,500.00 to purchase essential items for the school, such as textbooks or computers.

School Councils in affluent neighbourhoods have more time to fundraise than School Councils in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods. For instance, Principal #7 has a parent from a previous school, which is located in an affluent neighbourhood that is helping with the yard revitalization fundraising project. She “is a stay at home mom. Has been working 24/7 on this for a year and a half. I mean literally. Like I mean every day. I make contact a lot. There is no way I
could do that. I have a school to run. There is no way I can do that alone. Not a chance. So it’s amazing” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). Principal #6, commenting on the role of parents and fundraising, said, “In a perfect world all fundraising would be spread out equally. It’s about kids and equitability. Parents who don’t work have the time to fundraise and other parents who work don’t have the time and effort. They are exhausted” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). It is very important to note that parents of lower socioeconomic status may be exhausted and have little time to spare for fundraising, but are still very concerned about the lack of resources at their child’s school. All parents would like to provide the best possible education for their child and it is inequitable that fundraising plays a significant role in this pursuit.

The money raised by School Council is often referred to as “their money” and the School Council has the potential to be very vocal and controlling about fundraising strategies and how “their money” is spent. Principal #5 commenting on the role of School Councils said,

It bothers me that we have to do so much fundraising and the inequity of it. I have a really active School Council. We raise lots of money. The School Council has been really great with the partnership but that can change in two years if we get a different School Council that I can’t work with as closely and they would be controlling the money how we spend it. I mean so far it’s worked out really good. But I have worked in schools that we didn’t have a School Council. I had to bribe someone with a Timmy’s coffee to put their name down as the School Council chair. That type of thing.  

(Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011)

This information illustrates that while some schools barely have a School
Council, other schools may have aggressive ones that overstep their role as School Council in the school. For example, School Council #8 appears very keen and educated, but also controlling. “Another time one of the parents was really into Lego robotics and she wanted the school to buy Lego robotics so we had another little fundraiser” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). Furthermore, sometimes school principals disagree with their School Council over fundraising strategies. Principals #5 and #8 disagree with the QSP fundraising strategy because of how it is run, but their School Councils do not mind because they value the money QSP generates. Principal #8 describes the QSP assembly as “geared to sell, sell, sell and here is a little toy if you sell this much and another little toy if you. It’s gotten better I got to say over the years but it takes away from class time. It goes against what I believe you know. I mean I’m good with fundraising. I’m good with collecting money but not at the expense of class time” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). Principal #8’s comments show that the fundraising process does interfere with teaching and learning, and that the School Council may not be as concerned about this.

Fundraising is very time consuming for everyone involved, but a School Council does help reduce the time demands on staff. Many fundraising campaigns require buy-in that requires time and effort. For example, School #5 places an ad in the paper to advertise their craft sale to their community. Their craft sale last year generated about $6,000.00. In general, to advertise fundraising events, schools make announcements over the PA system, have school assemblies, classroom discussions, advertise in their school newsletters
and on websites, and send flyers home. For example, Schools #3, #5, #6 and #8 use QSP as a fundraising strategy. The QSP magazine subscription campaign, which offers subscriptions on over 600 magazines, requires a mandatory assembly or presentation and fundraising prizes. This process takes up instructional time. As well, Schools #1 and #5 use dance-a-thons as a fundraising strategy. The dance-a-thon at School #5 last year took up a half day of instructional time. Also, the Student Council at School #6 last year ran three dances to help with fundraising. Time spent on big fundraisers can range from two weeks to over three weeks, such as the 22 day Cadbury chocolate fundraising campaign at School #4.

Principal #3 described what is involved in a big fundraiser. “When you are doing a big fundraiser, and I have done this in the past where you are really focusing on fundraising, say selling chocolate in the past. It does take away in that you have to do a certain amount of assemblies; you’re promoting it on your announcement. It takes time on the teacher’s part to do some of the paperwork and removes the focus from teaching/learning” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). While the results of fundraising may enhance teaching and learning, it is the process that often compromises the goal of education. This principal, like Principal #8, is concerned about protecting instructional time. However, one should also be concerned with the students’ personal time because many of the fundraising campaigns require students to use their personal time to collect pledges or to sell a product.

Smaller fundraising events are also time consuming and usually detract
from the focus on learning. For example, Principal #4 says, “If it’s a bake sale they get all hyper. They’re not so focused” (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011). Principal #1 offers some sound advice to minimize the costs of fundraising by saying, “what you try to do is have it so that the teachers are involved in promoting it but are not counting, sorting. So you try to make as evasive as possible. You don’t want teachers counting money, losing class time. You want time spent with kids and time on task. What you try to do is make it painless almost and so that is done by having a lot of parent volunteers” (Principal #1, interview, July 12, 2011). Unfortunately not all schools have parent volunteers and it’s unfortunate that parent time cannot be used more productively to directly help students with learning, and even to lobby the provincial government to fully fund the public education system.

One common fundraising strategy seven of the eight schools used was the lunch fundraiser. This strategy required continual parent and/or staff time, and took instructional time away from teachers and students. Schools #1 (Pizza), #3 (The Lunch Lady) and #8 (Pizza and Subway) ran weekly lunch fundraisers and Schools #3 (Pizza) and #5 (Pizza) ran monthly lunch fundraisers. Principal #5 expressed concern that the lunch fundraisers are a distraction from the focus on teaching and learning. He/she said, “teachers have to collect the money. So at the beginning of the day sometimes they spend 15 minutes. That’s a distraction” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). He/she said each fundraising campaign is “usually about two weeks” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). If you do the math for School #8 which runs two lunches a week, at an average of
30 minutes a week per teacher for the collection of money, over a period of 30 weeks it totals 15 hours of instructional time per teacher, per year. One can only imagine what the collective total hours spent on fundraising per school would be if you added up the time spent on every single fundraising event. It is clear that the amount of time spent on fundraising by teachers is not only a waste of educational resources, but also an act of irresponsibility towards students who lose valuable instructional time.

The Ontario Ministry of Education also requests paperwork from the school council in the form of an annual report detailing fundraising activities. This report needs to be submitted to the principal and to the school board. The principal needs to make a copy of the report available to every parent of a student who is enrolled in the school on the date that the report is submitted (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2002, p. 12.5). These reports take time but are valuable from a due diligence accountability standpoint. None of the principals of this study mentioned this report, so it would be responsible for the Ministry of Education to verify if these reports are being submitted. These reports would be valuable for fundraising research and policy development.

Being financially accountable to the broader community members is also very important and that involves time and labour as well. Principal #1 is concerned a student may fundraise for his or her own private gain when a fundraising activity does not involve a product, such as a dance-a-thon and explained,

I also worry sometimes when you’re doing something
that is without a product that kids would inadvertently or go around it and canvas for the school and then not send the money in, so I want to make sure that all the forms come back in even if they’re not participating, so that there is no negative PR out in the school community.

So lets say I send a pledge form to every student about that we are having a dance-a-thon and if you would like to support this child. I have no way of knowing if 6 kids don’t participate that they didn’t go around neighbourhood, collect the money and not give it in. So what I want then is the letter coming back, the pledge form, a line through it saying that they can still participate in the dance-a-thon but they didn’t collect anything. I worry about sometimes that a few percentage can be using it for their own fundraising generating. 

(Principal #1, interview, July 12, 2011)

This principal’s rationale for having all the letters and pledge forms returned seems very valid, but again takes time and effort.

Another way a school should be accountable is to ensure their fundraising has a real purpose from the outset. Principal #7 was very expressive in emphasizing that fundraising should not work backwards or be done for the sake of fundraising. Schools #5 and #8, schools in affluent neighbourhoods, sometimes did the exact opposite. Principal #7 when asked, “Would you recommend fundraising to other principals?” responded,

Yeah. As long as there is a real need for it. If it’s just to fundraise for the sake of fundraising. No. But if it’s for a specific goal that is going to be a benefit, make the school a better place. Yes…I’ve been in schools, as a teacher, where we are going to raise funds for the school but there was no clear objective of what were the funds for. That to me is an issue. It has to be very upfront from the start. We are fundraising. This is what we are doing it for. Here are the benefits of it…I just think it needs to be right to the point. This is what we need the money for. We are not going
to get it any other way. So this is what we have to do.
(Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011)

This is a perfect example of how fundraising labour has the potential to be wasted on things the school really doesn’t need. Delaying the rewards and purpose of fundraising can also be frustrating and not very motivating or fair to either the fundraisers, or the people who are purchasing a product, making a donation or pledge. Overall, lack of time invested in assessing and sharing school fundraising needs from the outset does not serve the school well or reflect upon it well.

Finally, it is important to consider where the fundraised money is being spent in terms of minimizing ongoing costs related to the purchased items made through fundraising. For example, the practice of advertising and acknowledging donations made to the schools ironically has ongoing costs. It takes time and money to maintain boards that have plaques with family and corporation names on them. As well, if a playscape/playground is purchased through donations, it is the school and not the school board that is responsible for maintenance costs, even though it is technically owned by the school board. It is perplexing to note that, even though a school board will not take any responsibility for the funding of a playscape/playground, nor will they allow for the maintenance of it in a school’s budget, if one is procured through fundraising, they are the owners. Even more perplexing is that if a school board makes a donation to the funding for a playscape/playground, they demand their name be placed on a prominent acknowledgement board. Principal #2 explained, “The board does not allow fundraising to be used to paint the walls, lay new tiles, buy curtains, and other
kinds of renovations. However, fundraising can be used to install a playground, build a rock garden, etc. The board is dealing with millions and millions of dollars in work that can’t be done due to Ministry of Education funding – thank the Mike Harris years for that” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). It is surprising and unfair that schools need to fundraise for playgrounds/playscapes unless they are designated by their board as a “needy” school, such as School #4, and that some students have a $25,000 playground (School #4) while other students have a $110,000 playground (School #8). On a side note, schools that have a substantial amount of money through fundraising have the luxury of using their school budget to paint the school walls, create a clean visual appeal for their students, staff and parents and as a result provide a better teaching and learning environment.

Overall, schools that do not have active School Councils have to rely and use staff time to run fundraising events. The fundraising disparities among School Councils are significant and are inequitable because many affluent parents are well networked and have the time to organize and run fundraising events, while parents from low socioeconomic neighbourhoods do not have the connections nor the time. Also, when parents cannot directly pay for field trips or make cash donations to the school, both staff and students work harder and use more of their time to fundraise. The disparity in utilization of fundraised funds between affluent neighbourhoods versus lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods is significant and it correlates with student achievement. The impact of fundraising results on student achievement will be discussed next.
Chapter 5 Student Achievement

The most significant fundraising inequity found in this study was that the utilization of fundraised dollars does correlate positively with student achievement. Schools that fundraised large amounts of money overall experienced a higher level of student achievement. Principals provided their professional assessment on how the utilization of extra funds does support and increase student engagement and learning. Student achievement findings were supported by school EQAO results, athletic and music achievement and information gained through the principal interviews.

Fundraising in schools is a tool used to provide additional resources and experiences to students with the objective of increasing student engagement and achievement. The results of fundraising favour schools in affluent neighbourhoods because they are able to raise more funds and therefore utilize these funds in more ways to support student engagement and achievement than schools located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods. For students attending a school in an affluent neighbourhood this often means an extension of their private lifestyle into the public school system. “Kids in low socioeconomic schools should derive the same opportunities in a perfect world as kids in middle or high socioeconomic schools. Through school fundraising the rich kids are maintaining a level that they are already getting at home” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). This inequity suggests that students in low socioeconomic schools who need fundraised resources and experiences more so than students in schools in middle or high socioeconomic neighbourhoods (because their homes often do
not provide these opportunities) are at a disadvantage both at home and in the public school system. The current funding structure of public school systems that encourages fundraising without consideration for socioeconomic consequences, is only maintaining a lifestyle that some students have at home, rather than providing all students with the same advantages and opportunities to succeed in school. The Ontario Ministry of Education is creating inequity that favours the success of rich kids over poor kids.

Before further explanation of how the utilization of fundraised funds increases student achievement, a snapshot of achievement in this study has been provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Fundraising Amounts and Achievement Data for the 2010/2011 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Neighbourhood, Grades, and Number of Students</th>
<th>Fundraising Amount for School Year 2010-2011 (Excludes “Major” Trips)</th>
<th>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips</th>
<th>Total Fundraising (Includes “Major Trips”)</th>
<th>Average Fundraising Amount per Student Including “Major” Trips</th>
<th>Athletic Achievement</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 located in a low socio-economic neighbourhood K-8, 300 students</td>
<td>$14,200.00</td>
<td>$1,675.00</td>
<td>$15,875.00</td>
<td>$52.92</td>
<td>School last year won one pennant within their Board.</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>#2 located in a low socio-economic neighbourhood JK-6, 300 students</td>
<td>$6,200.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$6,200.00</td>
<td>$20.67</td>
<td>School has won a few recent pennants within their Board for basketball, ultimate frisbee and bordenball.</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>#3 located in a lower middle</td>
<td>$7,550.00</td>
<td>$8,848</td>
<td>$16,398.00</td>
<td>$42.59</td>
<td>School wins one or two</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Socioeconomic Neighbourhood</td>
<td>JK-8, 385 Students</td>
<td>JK-6, 215 Students</td>
<td>Pennants within their Board per year</td>
<td>#4 Located in a Low Socioeconomic Neighbourhood</td>
<td>#5 Located in an Affluent Neighbourhood JK-8, 650 Students</td>
<td>#6 Located in an Affluent Neighbourhood 7-8, 360 Students</td>
<td>#7 Located in a Low Socio-Economic Neighbourhood 6-8, Very Large Student Population</td>
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<td>$5,900.00</td>
<td>$935.00</td>
<td>$6,835.00</td>
<td>$31.75</td>
<td>Over the years the school has won a few sport pennants within their Board.</td>
<td>$50,000.00</td>
<td>$28,440.00</td>
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<td>$50,000.00</td>
<td>$28,440.00</td>
<td>$78,440.00</td>
<td>$120.67</td>
<td>School has many trophies and plaques across all sports within their Board. Last year won 17 pennants.</td>
<td>$50,000.00</td>
<td>$28,440.00</td>
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respectively in fundraising amounts per student (including “major” trips) and that overall these schools experienced the highest levels of achievement in this study. School #8 scored the highest EQAO results and achieved two to three athletic pennants due to their “bottom heavy” student population. School #5 scored the second highest EQAO results and achieved 17 athletic pennants, and School #6, grades 7 and 8, did not participate in EQAO and won 20 athletic pennants. In contrast, Schools #1, #2, #3, and #4, located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods raised an average of $52.92, $20.67, $42.59 and $31.75 respectively in fundraising amounts per student (including “major” trips) and experienced lower levels of achievement in this study. For example, School #1 scored the lowest EQAO results and won only one athletic pennant. School #7, located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood fundraised a substantial amount of money for the first time last school year, but had not utilized the bulk of the money yet, utilizing some fundraised money only for “major” field trips. Their student achievement was found to be very low compared to the other schools. Table 4 (page 171) – School Observation Tour also highlights individual school achievement relative to school resources and facilities. Schools that have more and superior resources and facilities outperform schools that have less of this. It is important to note that money raised correlates with more and superior resources and facilities.

All principals interviewed expressed the view that the results of fundraising impact student achievement positively, and their personal and professional experience in this area is supported by research in the education field. For
instance, while some people may think music, physical education, extracurricular activities and contact with nature are educational “frills”, these opportunities are very important for all students. Lack of extracurricular activities in schools due to low generated funds significantly impacts a student’s overall success (People for Education, 2011, p. 3). People for Education reports that the “Arts and sports programs play a key role in engaging students in school, yet the majority of elementary schools have no music teacher, and parent fundraising for the arts and sports continues to create inequities among schools” (People for Education, 2010, p. 3). The students most negatively affected are poor and visible minority students (TDSB Inner City Committee Advisory Committee (Fees and Funding Subcommittee), 2010, December, p. 12). Furthermore, Margaret Atwood insists on reminding people,

Not only is exercise an antidepressant – especially important for teenagers – but movement improves brain function. Like music training – shown to increase memory – it facilitates more efficient learning. It improves blood flow to the entire mind-body, thus aiding neural connectivity. But our education experts have tossed out not only music, but physical education. And the third essential mind-body patterning aid – contact with nature – has been severely cut back, as well...Pay attention, taxpayers: music, movement and nature are not frills!

(Atwood, 2010, pp. 22-23)

Staff, parents and students from my study did not approach music, athletics, extracurricular activities and nature as frills. Nor did they approach field trips and technology as frills. Table 3 (page 167) - How Money is Spent from Fundraising shows how much money was spent in these areas. The affluent schools spend
the most money on these areas because they were able to due to their strong ability to fundraise.

Table 3 - How Money is Spent from Fundraising shows utilization of funding discrepancies in amounts of money spent to support student learning. For example, School #2 has no camp field trip and borrows their band equipment. The principal from School #3 said, “My school would not be able to afford music instruments if we had to fundraise for them because we probably couldn’t raise the money to purchase the music instruments” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). When asked if his/her school had music instruments he/she said, “No, we don’t have music instruments as a whole” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). In contrast the music teacher from School #8 last year received $6,000.00 from their School Council for music instruments. This school also charged students a yearly music instrument fee of $40.00 if they did not have their own personal music instrument. School #6 spends about $2,500.00 a year on their music program. “The $2,500.00 from the two concert fundraisers is used to maintain the school’s 300 music instruments and music books. The cost of repairing and replacing music instruments is huge” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). He/she also said, “The school has an extremely strong music program” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). School #5 last year had $14,000.00 in GICs they needed to spend because their Board was “clamping down on people having large amounts of money…We had staff put in proposals and the criteria for the proposals was it had to impact the majority of the students, so they [School Council] really pumped a lot of money into the library,
they bought a smart board and a beautiful carpet. They upped our music program. They are buying instruments. They’ve put stuff in the gym...We are having a mural put up with our school logo. That’s going to be about $2,000.00" (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). The School Council also “hired a piano accompanist so the music teacher can just focus on directing the choir and not having to play piano at the same time” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). This principal believes the number and types of extracurricular activities and participation rates have increased at her school as a direct result of the application of additional funds raised through fundraising.

Music and art have a positive impact in other academic areas. When Principal #5 was asked if he/she believed that the benefits of additional funds from fundraising have an impact on overall academic achievement and if evidence could be provided to support the answer, he/she answered, “Yes, I do, because even though they do not support our academic programs per se, they spark an interest or love in the school and a pride in the school and I think if kids are happy they want to learn more and there is no saying how the confidence building of engaging a child in music or art can be really accurately measured. The confidence you give a child will help him or her to take risks in math and English and other areas. I’m a real firm believer in having a really balanced program” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). Not only is confidence built through music and art, but having taught students art and music in elementary and secondary grades, my personal experience has shown that literacy and math skills and concepts are learned through these subjects as well.
Furthermore, using students’ multiple intelligences as a strategy for teaching and learning is sound and valued pedagogy in the Ontario public education system.

Principals also pursue fundraising to ensure field trips take place because they are a very important piece to a student’s education. The Nevada Natural Resource Education Council, a catalyst of environmental literacy, is a strong advocate of the benefits of field trips.

Field trips are a key component of school instruction. They are not an add-on, not something that can be eliminated or reduced without serious consequences for student academic achievement.

The value of field trips includes:

- museums, zoos, aquaria, science centers, and natural areas offer resources that are simply not available in the classroom, including hands-on experiences, real artifacts, original sources, and more up-to-date information than textbooks
- well-designed field trips result in higher student academic performance in all subject areas
- students are motivated for classroom learning by real world application of what they are learning
- low-income and English language learner students make connections between community resources and opportunities, and their family and culture, leading to higher involvement in the classroom
- the civic engagement mission of schools is met when students use their learning to benefit their community through service learning projects, and to practice the skills of citizenship
- experiences match the variety of learning styles and intelligences, allowing all students to succeed

The professional staff at many field trip destinations have a level of training equal to classroom teachers, but specialize in creating highly effective informal learning experiences.

(NNREC, 2008, para. 1-4)

This list of field trip benefits is comprehensive, but there is still much more field
trips can offer students. For example, Principal #6 said field trips offer social benefits to students by commenting, “downhill skiing adds to social team building and making students well rounded individuals” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). Although social skills can also be taught in the school environment, for some students skiing field trips might be their only opportunity to experience this athletic sport, and it may also be a sport that, if they excel at, will boost their confidence.

Similar to the Nevada Natural Resource Education Council’s research on field trips, teaching pedagogy supports that the use of field trips is a valuable instructional strategy and a learning opportunity. In this study all principals commented that field trips are important and contribute to student achievement. Principal #5 said, “If you follow the theories of education, hands on learning, experiential education. You take a kid down to the ROM when you’re talking about medieval times and they see the medieval section, they are going to remember that. You remember that from your days in school. Do you remember your math classes? No, but you remember the field trip you went on” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). Furthermore, Principal #4 said, “we know that the more background experiences a child has the better they do in literacy because these background experiences bring meaning to the print in reading so I support field trips because of this benefit to student achievement” (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011).

Despite field trip benefits the Ontario Ministry of Education has left the funding of field trips at the mercy of fundraising. School budgets are simply not
sufficient enough to fund field trips and in many cases not large enough to disclose to all parents that if they cannot afford a field trip cost that they should come forward and the cost will be covered by the school’s budget. The cost of field trips for some parents and schools creates exclusion and results in loss of dignity. Field trips should be fully funded by the public school system and the opportunities should be consistent across all schools.

Figure A – Fundraising Dollars by School (page 53) shows that the schools located in affluent neighbourhoods spent the most money on “major” field trips compared to the schools located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods. For example, School #2 did not participate in any “major” field trip due to cost and lack of school board support in making this type of opportunity accessible to their students, whereas School #6 fundraised over $105,200.00 to support “major” field trips. This discrepancy is a social justice issue because every student in a public school system deserves equity in terms of school opportunities and experiences. More importantly, field trips, according to research and the principals in this study, correlate positively with student achievement.

How fundraised money is spent is important because the playing field for what supports student achievement in public schools, which includes resources, field trips, expert visitors, etc., should be the same across all schools, giving every student an equal opportunity to succeed. Principal #2 asserts, “What they use that money for is more important. If high fundraising schools are using the money for field trips, technology in the school, such as for smart boards, laptops,
performances, plays, it’s unfair to the students – who are in those schools that are not able to raise the same amounts of money” (Principal #2, interview, July 13, 2011). He/she thinks it is unfair because the items mentioned correlate positively with student achievement. Principal #1 also believes the benefits of additional funds from fundraising improves academic achievement, but also promotes school climate and pride. “Using money to have scientists in the school where you have scientists come in. They do hands on experiments. The kids get to use equipment they may not normally have access to. It brings in parent volunteers to sit with the kids and work with them. Parents get to see how their kids are learning and what they’re learning, so I think really that would benefit student learning. I think anything that goes towards the school, whether it’s school uniforms or busing where the school is represented at a track meet or sporting event, it promotes the school climate and the school pride” (Principal #1, interview, July 12, 2011).

Schools in affluent neighbourhoods fundraise large amounts of money and can afford technology purchases that support student learning. School #8 School Council purchased smart boards and smart board document cameras for their teachers. Document cameras are “a time saver. They [teachers] don’t have to make photocopied sheets or overhead sheets. They just stick a book under it and show it and it’s in colour and they can manipulate things from their computer on the screen. They can take a shot. They can take a picture of something and manipulate that on the screen” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). Smart boards also support student learning. “Smart boards help teachers incorporate
an additional strategy and it’s hands-on for the kids and they are more attentive” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). From the schools located in the lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods only School #4 spent some fundraised money on technology. The principal stopped spending for scientists in the school program and used the money that would normally go towards that for smart boards. He/she plans to continue spending money on smart boards and all the supporting equipment needed, such as laptops and clickers. Whereas schools in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods need to sacrifice programs for technology, schools in affluent neighbourhoods raise enough money for everything.

The yard revitalization at School #7 has many academic benefits. It is going to support the environmental parts of the grade 7 science curriculum and the athletics curriculum. The biggest benefit of the yard revitalization is getting parents comfortable and therefore more involved with the school. Their school principal said,

people see that we are really trying to do something for the community and the fact that we are doing that for them. They feel a lot more comfortable when they walk in this place. So I see parents coming in to ask questions, not just about that project but the school in general. They would never have done that before. There was this sort of reluctance for people to come, afraid to come in. They would ask certain people to speak for them, representatives from the community. I’ve seen less of that and more people coming to us. Feeling comfortable with us. So the fact that they are feeling more comfortable, we can now approach them about academics and I think it will make a difference but can I show that physically? I don’t think I can do that yet but I think I’ll be able to do that a year from now.

(Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011)
Parental involvement in the school was a theme in this study in promoting student achievement. Principal #1 said having the scientists in the school promoted parental involvement and Principal #4 said that when students see parents and teachers involved in the school it helps promote self-esteem in students. Students see things are being done for them, and “if they feel good about themselves and happy about their teachers and everything then they generally tend to do better” (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011). Principal #8 believes that parents who are involved in promoting academics in the school are also involved in supporting academics at home. However, it’s important to recognize that fundraising is not necessary for parental involvement and schools need to look at other ways to engage parents since the benefits are valuable to student achievement.

Principal #6 believes that the benefits of additional funds from fundraising help with overall academic achievement. He/she said, “CASI scores in literacy indicate improved scores. Testing in math has also indicated improved scores in 2010/2011. In the scoring I can tell you that on average 2.5% of our student body improved their literacy and numeracy scores from earlier in the year when testing was done” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). He/she also said that teachers are still on a learning curve with smart boards, indicating a more positive result is expected from smart boards. School #4 is also looking forward to more results from smart boards as more are purchased. Overall, for Principal #6, the additional benefits from fundraising are being able to give “kids the opportunity to have more opportunities. For example, smart boards, data
projector, and more sports equipment while outside during lunchtime” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). These opportunities help students with achievement because they keep them engaged and excited about school.

There were principals in this study who did not feel that fundraising improved student achievement when asked directly, but at different points in their interview conceded that it did. I believe the principals were thinking about what fundraising should be for and at moments got wrapped into the idea that fundraising only provided “frills”. For example, Principal #3 said, “I think the overall impact of fundraising on academic achievement is minimal” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). During the interview he/she also said that fundraising provided the school with the additional resources that the school budget could not afford. “So it is kind of the frills. I like to say. So that's the benefits” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011). However, during different points in the interview he/she added that scientists in the school presentations do support curriculum, money raised through fundraising does increase number and types of extracurricular activities and participation rates, selling magazines promotes literacy and that field trips impact education positively.

There are other examples of how principals contradicted themselves on the topic of fundraising achievement relevancy. Principal #5 believes the benefits of additional funds from fundraising has an impact on overall academic achievement, but makes a qualifying statement that “even though they don’t support our academic programs per se, they spark an interest in love in the school and a pride in the school and I think if kids are happy they want to learn
more” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). However, when you look at School #5 in Table 3 (page 167) - How Money is Spent from Fundraising it is apparent that money raised through fundraising is being utilized to support student achievement and is being used to make purchases the government should be responsible for. Teachers at this school have more resources to support their program than schools located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods. One example provided by Principal #5 was that an artist “come in and did grass rubbings with the kids and so that complimented the grade 4 medieval studies. Lots of pottery. Amazing little art projects, which get you thinking in a creative way and they can tie it into math. You walk into this classroom and there is stuff going on. Every child is engaged. Every child is happy. They are all working. It just spills over into other areas” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). School #8 also has resources from fundraised money to support their music, athletic, literacy, math, science and programming programs. For example, the school has a Lego Robotics extracurricular Club that helps with many areas, such as math, science and programming. Their teachers are excited and enthusiastic about having more freedom in resources to compliment their programs and resources that save time in photocopying. The teachers know that if they need something their School Council will support them. One teacher requested money for Nintendo DS’s to help with teaching the students math skills and the School Council supported her by purchasing some DSs (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011).

This study’s finding on student achievement is also supported through a
comparison of fundraising amounts between TDSB and YRDSB relative to their EQAO score results for the school year 2008-2009. Table 1 below shows fundraising dollar results for the top 20 fundraising schools versus the bottom 20 schools in TDSB and YRDSB. The average dollar figure per student is also provided.

**Table 1- TDSB-YRDSB Fundraising Comparison (2008-2009)**

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<tr>
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<th>Top 20 Schools Total</th>
<th>Average per Student</th>
<th>Bottom 20 Schools Total</th>
<th>Average per Student</th>
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<tr>
<td>TDSB (2008-2009)</td>
<td>$4.4 million</td>
<td>$418.19</td>
<td>$103,000</td>
<td>$18.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>YRDSB (2008-2009)</td>
<td>$4.8 million</td>
<td>$398.78</td>
<td>$844,126</td>
<td>$168.35</td>
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Sources: (Toronto District School Board, 2008-09; York Region District School Board, 2008-09)

The most noteworthy figures are the bottom 20 schools for each board. They show that low fundraising schools in TDSB really are poor, while it could be argued that there are no poor schools in YRDSB. Table 5 below shows grades 3 and 6 average EQAO scores (2008-2009) for TDSB, YRDSB and the province.

**Table 5 - EQAO Scores (2008-2009) - Comparison Between TDSB, YRDSB and Province Averages**

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<th>YRDSB Gr. 3</th>
<th>YRDSB Gr. 6</th>
<th>Province Gr. 3</th>
<th>Province Gr. 6</th>
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Source: (EQAO, 2011, p. 1)  
https://eqaoweb.eqao.com/pbs/Listing.aspx

These two tables show that the YRDSB outperforms TDSB in EQAO scores, and is well above the provincial averages, while TDSB overall scores lower than the
provincial averages. This is due to YRDSB having more disposable income per student to spend on resources and facilities that support student learning and achievement and is contrary to Ontario’s Ministry of Education funding aim which “is meant to be equitable in order to provide equal educational opportunity for all students” (The Annual Report on Ontario’s Publicly Funded Schools, 2010, p. 26). This type of board comparison could be done across all school boards.

In conclusion, what fundraised money is used for was an important finding of this study and is precisely what Ontario’s former Minister of Education said is required to move forward on issues pertaining to fundraising. Leona Dombrowsky has indicated she needs to know how much is being raised and what it’s being raised for (Winsa & Rushowy, 2011, February, p. 2). One hopes that with this additional information the Minister of Education will address the unfairness of fundraising in the public school system. The main issue is that fundraising helps some students to achieve and succeed, while excluding others from this opportunity. The Ministry of Education’s decision to allow enhancement to programs and curriculums is giving one set of students an academic advantage over other students. By not fully funding schools, full support and a complete robust curriculum is not available to every student. Instead, by encouraging commercialism and for profit corporate relationships, schools in this study involved with the private sector were forced by circumstance to accept conditional funding, and were unwittingly subjected to a consumer ideology and the neoliberal agenda.
Chapter 6 Commercialism and the Neoliberal Agenda

6 Introduction

The strong neoliberal movement changes the model of public education from a democratic and equitable system to a business model designed to make profits for the private sector. The Ontario Ministry of Education opens the door to this by allowing school fundraising for the purpose of curriculum enhancements. Unfortunately, the inequities of fundraising undermine the public school system, exposing it to economic annexation by corporations or any entity with a profit motive.

One of the major reasons why the public education system is being exposed to and threatened by commercialism is due to government underfunding. Inadequate funding forces public schools to go into fundraising survival mode and take on a desperate business marketing role. They begin to adopt a neoliberal consumer ideology that promotes commercialism and weakens the effectiveness of public schools. Underfunded schools compete for limited resources by marketing themselves, accepting conditional funding, and compromising their curriculum and the entire democratic intent of the public educational system.

When philanthrocapitalists and corporations enter the public school system they begin to control and bias the school curriculum by promoting their own agenda, which includes a consumer ideology and the promotion of commercialism. Furthermore, the neoliberal agenda targeting the public school system provides the private sector with control and authority over schools,
making it easier for them to maximize their revenue since there is minimal accountability and government regulation. It is also damaging to students because many schools are left with inadequate resources, and as a result many students are educationally marginalized because a school’s main objective may be to maximize profit at the expense of high quality education, civic duties and democratic values. Furthermore, key features of an egalitarian society are democracy and public education, and without these characteristics the divide between rich and poor people is increasing.

6.1 Conditional Funding

When schools enter into a relationship with a corporation or a philanthrocapitalist the terms and conditions of that relationship are set by the donor. It is never a benevolent act of social responsibility. There is always a hook. Corporate school partnerships involve conditions that can include appropriation of space, school time, under-aged and commission based sales representatives, public disclosure, and contract periods that amount to nothing more than conditional funding.

Schools are forced by circumstance to provide space for commercial advertising. For example, Principal #5 said, “We have a tree of giving. We acknowledge them that way. If Starbucks gives us the coffee then we put a sign up – “Starbucks donated the coffee”” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). The tree of giving referred to acknowledges corporate names by displaying them as leaves. Schools #5 and #8 both have permanent signage in their schoolyards to acknowledge corporate donations that were made to their school. This public
appropriation of space was designed to meet corporate requests for permanent signage in return for corporate playground donations. Unlike Principal #5, Principal #8 actually offered permanent signage to corporations to attract corporate playscape donations. The permanent signage was based on the size of the donation. Small donations got a sign on a yard bench, whereas large donations, referred to as platinum donors, received signage on a very visible yard board. He/she told me that the signage is maintained through School Council funds (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). Therefore, providing permanent signage is a long-term expense for schools and for future students who will likely need to fundraise to maintain these corporate signs.

Corporate signage does not only take up public space and create ongoing school expenses, but it may also be very distasteful. Principal #7 is currently struggling with permanent signage requests because corporations would like great big visible signage. He/she wants to ensure that the signage is tasteful and meets board guidelines, but indicated that some of the requests have been unreasonable (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011).

The appropriation of space can also be temporary during the fundraising campaign period. Some schools advertised in their school newsletters and websites. School space is also being allocated for assemblies, craft sales, book fairs, pizza, Subway and The Lady Lunch lunches. There should not be a need to commercialize the school environment and to take the focus off the intent of public schools. Public school space should be utilized for student and parent learning, and for important school updates. It should not be used to allow for
private corporate gains.

School time dedicated to fundraising initiatives is also a condition of all corporate based fundraising campaigns, and some fundraising initiatives also demand the inclusion of mandatory prizes. For example, Cadbury requires mandatory assemblies to get the staff and students excited and motivated to sell their products. They also provide students with prizes for selling. The assemblies and prizes are mandatory. Principal #4 says about the Cadbury campaign, “We show them the prizes that they can win. They get pretty hyped about it” (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011). Students receive a prize, such as a crunchy bar after each box of chocolates they sell. At the end of the campaign there are prizes for top sellers as well. This process takes time and focus away from classroom learning and home studies as students may be more focused on selling after school rather than doing homework or studying.

QSP, an approximately US $110 million dollar corporation (2009, Lexpert, para. 1), is another example of a corporation that places many conditions on their school partnership. They require mandatory school assemblies, provide students with prizes to motivate sales, and receive a percentage of the profits from each sale made. Principal #6 said that QSP does a mandatory presentation that includes how to get subscriptions online, and safety tips for door to door canvassing (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). Two principals in this study have issues with the prizes. Principals #5 and #6 expressed a strong dislike for QSP. Principal #5 hates the idea of QSP using prizes to encourage the students to sell. Principal #8 said, “we do have an assembly for QSP and I got to say I
hate that assembly…it’s so geared to sell, sell, sell and here is a little toy if you sell this much and another little toy if you. Its gotten better I got to say over the years but it takes away from class time. It goes against what I believe you know. I mean I’m good with fundraising. I’m good with collecting money but not at the expense of class time” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). There is no shortage of examples to show that time is required for fundraising and too many to even attempt to describe them all.

Students used their own personal time to work as sales representatives to promote and sell product in exchange for modest percentages of corporate profits. In this study it was learned that a school or student was never given 100% of the proceeds from selling a corporate product. All companies reaped direct financial benefit from sales, as well as free labour, new customers, and branding opportunities that build a seemingly positive, socially responsible public image. Scholastic Canada, rather than providing immediate financial benefit, gives credits to the school for sales instead of money. This is a reliable hook to capture more Scholastic sales in addition to the profits made directly from students.

Using students to sell corporate product is an indirect form of child labour, which includes student labour on evenings, weekends and holidays. For example, Cadbury, worth about 20 billion dollars (Associated Press, 2010), provides only a 40% profit margin to schools, which means Cadbury still profits significantly from each sale. The students at School #4 work a 22 day campaign that begins at the end of January and ends after the Family Day weekend in an
attempt to make as many sales as possible. Cadbury supplies 2 different sizes of chocolate bars for sale. Students would have had to sell between 1,600 and 5,000 chocolate bars at a quantity of between 7.47 and 23.26 bars per student to reach the $5,000.00 in sales achieved, which resulted in a profit of $2,000.00 for the school and a profit of $3,000.00 for Cadbury (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011; Cadbury, 2011). The school-Cadbury partnership is unhealthy because the corporate benefits outweigh the school benefits, but schools continue to engage with Cadbury because of their financial need.

The involvement of young children in sales and advertising is controversial. Cadbury states, “We do not advertise where children under the age of eight years are likely to be the majority of the audience. Advertising to children is appropriate only when it is conducted in an environment that supports the parental role, or where the child has reached an age of cognizance and reason, which is now generally accepted as eight years” (Cadbury, 2011, October 18). Despite this public show of concern on their website it has not deterred 5 year olds from striving to be the top Cadbury seller at their school. Principal #4 shared that, in the past, a kindergarten student won the top seller prize (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011). These prizes are all encouraged and provided by Cadbury, so it is difficult to understand how they are protecting students who are seven years old or younger. A more benevolent and socially responsible way to help schools would be for Cadbury to donate cash directly to school boards, perhaps through their own corporate fundraising initiatives and by using their own sales staff.
All school partnerships permit corporations to publicly disclose their partnerships. School partnerships are displayed through various mediums. For example, Boston Pizza has Celebrity Server Events that are public by nature. The students serve customers in their store for 10% of the food sales. School #8 participates in the Boston Pizza Celebrity Server Event. Some corporations, such as Starbucks, receive public recognition by posting in their stores letters of acknowledgement received from schools. Others, such as Canadian Tire and Pizza Pizza, use their websites to share their partnerships. Also, corporations receive public disclosure when schools’ provide space to visibly display corporate names.

Corporate funding can also be conditional when the partnership with a school is defined by a specific contract period. For instance, Canadian Tire’s Jumpstart partnership that School #7 has applied for includes a contract period. “We are hoping to get money from them and they’ll cover it, they’ll cover a coordinator, and whatever equipment we have to pay for... for a period of X number of years. Three years. Five years. Whatever. Then you apply again” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). Contract periods make sponsored school programs dependent upon renewal of the contract and leaves schools in a vulnerable and unpredictable position. Furthermore, corporations set the terms of conditional funding by selecting which athletic programs, extracurricular activities, and educational materials they would like to sponsor (Froese-Germain et al., 2006, pp. 30-32). When the recipient of a donation is at the mercy of the donor it leaves the recipient, in this case the school, in a weak negotiating
position. For example, with all Canadian Tire Jumpstart applications “approvals are the sole discretion of the local Canadian Tire Jumpstart chapter and designated Canadian Tire Jumpstart personnel” (Canadian Tire Jumpstart, 2011). This condition is not equitable because it leaves room for impartiality and hidden agendas.

Philanthrocapitalists and parents also exhibit conditional funding tendencies. They prefer to direct their own money rather than donating it to the government or to the school board and allowing them to direct it. For example, the parents of School #5 and #8 are strong QSP supporters due to the volume of profit their school receives, despite the concerns their principals have about QSP. Philanthrocapitalists will also support their own interests without the education and experience of knowing what is best for the students. For instance, it is only natural that Bill Gates would encourage technology in the school system, especially Microsoft technology instead of Apple technology.

Money entering the public school system should be spent impartially and equitably so that all students benefit in all neighbourhoods and in areas that are in the students’ best interest. Partnering with corporations require students, staff and family to work by selling their product. Conditional fundraising enables corporations to make immediate profits, promote brand loyalty, provide a positive socially responsible public image and to promote their own agenda. Thus, private money entering the public school system may be used for profit driven hidden agendas instead of for the public good.
6.2 Commercialism and the Consumer Ideology

The Ministry of Education in Ontario claims they use a democratic, impartial and equitable system for curriculum development and teaching that provides all students with equal learning opportunities to thrive. The intent of public schools is also to teach democratic values, civic duties, and a healthy lifestyle. TDSB’s mission statement “is to enable all students to reach high levels of achievement and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values they need to become responsible members of a democratic society” (TDSB, 2011, para. 1). They also state the need for a strong public education system, accessibility and a respectful, safe and nurturing learning environment. The YRDSB values include striving for equity, inclusiveness, and a safe and nurturing community (YRDSB, 2011, para. 3). The common values of equity, inclusiveness and providing a safe and nurturing environment are undermined when corporations view and enter schools to make a profit. Corporations promote commercialism, a consumer ideology and society, and an unhealthy lifestyle and partnership based on dependency.

Commercialism undermines democratic ideology, especially critical thinking. "The tension between the educative mission of schools and the corporate imperative to earn profits means that when corporations enter schools, there is going to be pressure to create student experiences and shape student attitudes in ways that support, or at least do not undermine, the corporate bottom line. This pressure is inherent in the relationship" (Molnar et al., 2011, p. 8). When the educational system is driven by corporate interests, instead of
developing students’ critical consciousness, corporations succeed in shaping people both in and out of schools, resulting in the development of a consumer society (Coll, 1999, pp. 4-6). This type of society is very undesirable. Principal #8 when asked, “Do you think commercial activity in schools promotes certain values?” responded, “Not the good ones” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). He/she also commented on QSP involvement at the school. “I don’t like QSP because it does promote commercialism and bribery and all that stuff and this junk stuff. This junk society we are in. I don’t like that” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). The problem is that schools are underfunded. They are pressured to fundraise using corporate partnerships and it’s hard to say no to the money. Principal #8 said that although it would be a problem to have a public plaque for a liquor or tobacco company, he/she would still take their money (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011). That statement underlines the desperate need for money in the public school system.

Other principals took issue with commercialism being present in schools as well. Principal #1 said, “I think we have to make sure our fundraising represents our values of the school and the health of the children” (Principal #1, interview, July 12, 2011). He/she limits the amount of unhealthy food the school will endorse. Principal #7 also limits the interference of commercial activity in the school by using the school budget to make purchases for valuable items. He/she said, “I don’t like the idea of, the whole idea of signage and all that stuff makes me a little nervous. You know having a sponsor to put TVs in the school didn’t sit well with me either. Mind you we have, you’ll notice when you walk through the
school, we've got a few big screen TVs...I bought them with school budget because we put announcements on them. I recognize kids on them. I did what the Board wanted corporations to do” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011).

The allocation of money towards expensive items, such as big screen TVs takes money away from other areas, such as music instruments and field trips, but the benefit is that school purchased TV’s will ensure students won’t be exposed to daily commercials from private corporations.

Principal #6 does not agree with commercialism in schools either.

Commercialism is potent for children and adults and I do not agree with commercialism in schools, especially elementary schools. Values are a huge issue. Values should be developed and come from the home and only “good” positive values should be coming from schools. Sometimes even a principal’s and parent’s value is not in agreement. For example, some parents defend low cut tops and shorts that are “too short” even if it’s against the school policy. Allowing commercialism into schools can complicate things and create more problems to deal with. Commercialism may promote values not approved by parents. When schools are constantly selling things there is a lot of peer pressure to these items. High school students have more disposable money so promoting a certain company in a school is like promoting brand loyalty.

(Principal #6, interview, August 8, 2011)

This principal clearly highlighted the responsibilities of home and school regarding values. His/her comment about promoting brand loyalty can represent a conflict of interest if schools or an individual from the school or board is gaining financially from the promotion of brand loyalty. Brand loyalty has many advantages for corporations because it may impact students’ behaviours, as well as their families, both short and long-term. Through brand loyalty, peer pressure
and marketing in the schools “kids become unpaid corporate representatives within their own family, known within the marketing industry as the Nag Factor or Pester Power” (Norris, 2009, p. 50). If any corporate product or service turns out to be unhealthy or detrimental the board may have to deal with the fall out. It is unlikely that they will be able to distance themselves from a corporate product or service they have endorsed into their school system.

The Lunch Lady is a perfect example of a potential disaster. The Lunch Lady in this study was found to be one of the most problematic school partnerships. The Lunch Lady is a vendor for many Ontario school boards and considered to be a service to families. The Lunch Lady has a profit driven agenda. Both the board and the school receive a small profit off every dollar of food that is ordered through The Lunch Lady. The Lunch Lady and the Ontario school boards claim the business meets the Ontario School Food and Beverage Policy/Program Memorandum No. 150. However, upon taking a look at their menu one can quickly note that there is no fresh whole fruit. They only offer fresh apple slices ($1.00) and peach slices in juice ($1.25). As well, the only salad they offer is the caesar salad, a salad notoriously known as being the unhealthiest salad. A caesar salad, compared to other salads, is low on nutrition because it includes no peppers, tomatoes or cucumbers. Furthermore, when placing a lunch order nothing appears to stop a student from ordering more than one food portion or from choosing unhealthier options for their lunch, such as chocolate milk, cookies, hamburgers, and pizza. Ironically adding healthy choices/toppings to burgers, such as lettuce or a pickle costs an additional $1.00.
Although they claim to be healthy, nowhere on their website do they post the nutritional information for their lunch items, nor will they make it directly available to their customers, preferring to ask their customers to consult with their school or board instead (C. Kreidstein, personal communication, September 16, 2011).

Lunch Lady customers have complained about the quality and nutritional value of their lunch items. For example, Karen Berry on February 22, 2011 on The Lunch Lady Facebook page expressed, “Some of the moms from my son’s school and I have many questions in regards to the quality of food that is being served. I have not placed any orders through The Lunch Lady because I cannot get any answers” (Berry, 2011, February 22). There have been complaints about the tiny food portions. Brandon Petryga said, “I had the chicken nuggets and they only had 4” (Petryga, 2011, February 2). The Lunch Lady lunch items are also expensive. Macaroni and cheese costs $5.00 and a juice box costs a $1.00. These items can be easily purchased as organic and for cheaper prices at grocery stores.

Despite the concerns over The Lunch Lady, parents continue to order their food for convenience, or because their child is hooked on it. One mom said, “My son is a very picky eater, but he loves the meals so much that he basically refuses lunch from home the three days out of the week when he doesn't get lunch lady. I usually purchase meals for a full month, and would have no problem doing so for meals 5 days a week for him because it would mean he's eating!! Please let me know if and when you guys might start doing this!!” (Kai, 2011, February 2). This dependency on catered lunches is very alarming and is a good
example of our consumer society. There seems to be a consumer solution to meet all our needs, but the expense of these solutions does not serve us well as critical and capable individuals. A parent really does not know what their child is eating when they order The Lunch Lady for their child and the recent Whole Green Kids fraud supports the potential for a catering vendor disaster.

Whole Green Kids, a three-year-old trusted catering company in Toronto, owned and operated by Susan Blouin, was investigated by Toronto Public Health and shut down in June 2011. A Toronto Star investigation found that Whole Green Kids, which catered to daycares and Montessori schools in the GTA and Ottawa, bought food from No Frills and re-labeled and re-packaged the food as organic (Brazao, 2011, p. 2).

Former employees told the Star of undercooked meals, having to re-label no-name snacks as organic, and passing off chicken and beef purchased from Portuguese and Italian butchers as halal and kosher... Former employees tell stories of milk bags left overnight in car trunks, ground beef driven to Ottawa in personal cars with no coolers and of undercooked chicken rushed off the grille to meet delivery deadlines. Prepackaged Knorr chicken soup was mixed with frozen vegetables and passed off as homemade and organic ... Cooking out of a private residence is a “definite no-no” says Jim Chan, manager of food safety for Toronto Public Health. Food prepared for daycares must be in a licensed and inspected “commercial” venue.

(Brazao, 2011, pp. 3 & 6)

In addition, Susan Blouin was evicted from kitchens for not paying rent, was ordered by the provincial labour ministry to pay seven employees money she owes them, and had company delivery trucks repossessed. Yet, despite her wrongdoings, she lived in a rented $2.2 million Georgian home in Thorncrest
Village and drove a Porsche Cayenne SUV (Brazao, 2011, p. 2). The fallout of this company has sparked great debate about who is to blame. School boards do not need to risk this kind of potential disaster so that elite people can profit and live in luxury. The liability risk and our children's health are too great. A school board has a responsibility to select safe vendors for schools. The intent or responsibility of the public education system is not the provision of a profit driven lunch service for parents. The approval of catered lunches is a very consumerist approach, an alternative solution to packing a child a lunch and may condition children from an early age to be dependent on buying ready made meals. Catering companies need regular audits to ensure safe and sanitary operating practices are being implemented, that the food quality meets health standards and that contract terms to clients are being met. Any company has the potential to be dishonest, unsafe and operate under illegal work practices.

This study includes several more examples of food partnerships that promote unhealthy food. Based on this study, the Table 6 shows the food sold to students in the schools, and food items students are expected to sell for fundraising. Please note that minor items, such as freezies or valentine treats have been excluded from the chart.
Table 6 – Individual School Food Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School #</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>School Profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Weekly Pizza Lunches</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pizza or Hot Dog Lunch three times a year</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Monthly Pizza Lunches</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Lady Lunch Weekly</td>
<td>$550.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cadbury Chocolate Fundraiser (22 day campaign) Pizza Lunches</td>
<td>$2,000.00 Unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Monthly Pizzas</td>
<td>$6,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chocolate Bars</td>
<td>$4,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pizza</td>
<td>$875.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No Food Sold</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Weekly Pizza and Subway Smoothies and Milk</td>
<td>$27,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
All data is approximate due to availability of information.

The table shows that pizza and chocolate are the most popular food school partnerships and that the majority of food sold in the schools is unhealthy. Research shows that “the most controversial school-based marketing programs are those that promote junk food…constitute a pervasive informal curriculum that sends children powerful health messages undermining the formal curriculum. The growth of junk food marketing practices parallels a significant rise in obesity among young people (Molnar, 2006, p. 630). While The Lunch Lady promotes junk food by including it as choices on their menu and allowing an unlimited food order or combination of food per student, the school endorsement of chocolate
and pizza is blatantly unhealthy too. Even hotdogs and Subway lunches are unhealthy as they contain processed meats and usually contain very high sodium levels.

Pizza and Cadbury do not comply with the Ontario School Food and Beverage Policy/Program Memorandum No. 150. Chocolate is not permitted for sale under the policy. In 2009 the Canadian Stroke Network, the Canadian Obesity Network and the Advanced Foods and Materials Network awarded the “annual national “Salt Lick Award” to the country’s pizza producers for loading the popular fast-food with blood-pressure raising sodium” (Campell et al., 2009, para. 1). A Pizza Pizza small or medium slice pepperoni on white crust provides only 1 gram of fiber and is therefore not permitted for sale based on Policy 150. The pizza nutrition criterion is \( \geq 2 \)g of fiber. Eating two slices would meet the fiber criteria, but then it would go over the sodium mg level permitted. The sodium amount for pizza must be \( \leq 960 \) mg and two slices of pizza has 1040 mg of sodium (Pizza Pizza, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2010, October 4). It would be far easier for school boards to ban fast-food pizza than to try policing its fiber and sodium levels to ensure they meet the acceptable health standards set by the Ministry of Education.

Furthermore, when schools regularly sell pizza because it’s the prominent lunch fundraiser, students are inadvertently being taught an informal commercialized curriculum that pizza is a healthy lifestyle choice without being presented the nutritional facts to support an informed decision. This practice, which promotes low-level and non-critical thinking, will impact choices made
outside of school hours. It is particularly important to note that a "walk-in slice of pepperoni pizza at Pizza Pizza, for example, has about 590 calories, 18 grams of fat and 1,630 milligrams of sodium" (Ogilvie, 2010, para. 12). There are many examples of sodium-laden pizza products across the country. For instance, “based on a scan of nutritional information posted on pizza makers’ own websites:

- Two slices (292 grams total) of a Pepperoni Lover’s large stuffed crust pizza at Pizza Hut contain 3,000 mg of sodium – double the recommended intake for a full day.
- Two slices (284 grams total) of a large Rustic Italian pizza at Boston Pizza contain 2,580 mg of sodium.
- One large slice (339 grams) of Meat Supreme from a walk-in Pizza Pizza restaurant contains 2,400 mg of sodium” (Campell et al., 2009, para. 4).

The high levels of sodium are alarming. “While the body needs some sodium to function, too much may lead to high blood pressure, a major risk factor for stroke, heart disease and kidney disease” (Health Canada, 2011, para. 1). Salt is also addictive and “associated with an increased risk for stomach cancer, kidney disease, osteoporosis and asthma” (Weeks, 2009, pp.1-2). There is no reason schools should be offering food with high levels of sodium to students and helping corporations to profit from high sodium food sales.

Subway fundraiser lunches are another culprit of high levels of sodium. They use mainly processed meats and cheese for their subs and sell some
products that have MSG. Unless you are ordering a 6 inch “Fresh Fit” Subway with no cheese, olives, or condiments you will be exceeding the Ministry of Education’s School and Beverage Safety Policy of 960 mg of sodium limit per sandwich (Forer, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2010, October 4). Now Subway has a mini “Fresh Fit for Kids” sub, but even these mini subs can exceed the 960 mg of sodium limit per sandwich with the addition of cheese, olives and condiments. Schools who allow pizza and Subway restaurants into their schools promote brand loyalty. This may not be wise as pizza and Subway restaurants also sell junk food, such as pop, deep fried wings and chips. Students who visit these fast-food establishments will receive mixed messages about what exactly their school supports in terms of nutritional value.

Marketing in schools is dangerous. A consumer world and society is based on manipulation by corporations and is “skewed towards luxury for the wealthy rather than necessities for the poor” (Chomsky & Barsamian, 1994, p. 290). Schools located in affluent neighbourhoods also strive for luxury items and programs. For instance, School #8’s playscape cost $110,000, while School #4’s playground only cost $25,000. Also, some students of School #6, located in an affluent neighbourhood, are offered to take part in expensive field trips, such as skiing and music camp. In a consumer world, “a lot of that consumption is artificially induced consumption. It’s not consumption that has to do with people’s real wants. A huge amount of business propaganda…is simply an effort to create wants…The richer countries are the higher consumers by a large measure, but internally to the richer countries, the wealthy are higher consumers by a large
measure” (Chomsky & Barsamian, 1994, pp. 289-290). School expectations may be based on luxuries rather than “real wants”. Consider the example of School #7 that is fundraising for a luxury 1 million plus yard revitalization, which will include a butterfly garden and an outdoor theater.

The ability to create a consumer society is relatively easy if left unchallenged. Molnar et al.’s (2010) report titled “Effectively Embedded: Schools and The Machinery Of Modern Marketing – The Thirteenth Annual Report on Schoolhouse Commercializing Trends: 2009-2010” examines how embedded advertising influences children’s attitudes and affects them psychologically. “Advertising makes children want more, eat more, and think that their self-worth can and should come from commercial products. It heightens their insecurities, distorts their gender socialization, and displaces the development of values and activities other than those associated with commercialism. Its greatest advantage is that stakeholders, including children themselves, discount its effectiveness” (Molnar et al., 2010, Executive Summary). This lack of student self-awareness is problematic because students lack the knowledge to be critical of commercialism and its effectiveness. For instance, Principal #8 said students cry if they do not receive their QSP junky little prizes, even if they have a million of the little prize items at home. The principal thinks QSP promotes a junk society (Principal #8, interview, August 8, 2011). Also, families get conditioned to fundraisers and so schools think twice before dropping a fundraising strategy. He/she said, “It takes a lot of years to make money with QSP because parents now know that in October or September they are going to get these magazine subscriptions and
so they wait for that. My family waits for them” (Principal #8, interview, August 8, 2011). This principal’s thinking on fundraising is very critical. This is not always the case. All principals had something negative to say about school commercialism, but Principals #3, #5 and #7 said there were no negative impacts of fundraising at their school. This situation shows how conflicting thoughts can be on school commercialism and indicates a need for further research and reflection on this topic.

Even Scholastic promotes a junk society. Five of the eight schools used Scholastic as one fundraising strategy. In Scholastic’s June 2011 flyer, which was part of their Scholastic Book Fair, the company sold Nintendo DS and Wii games, such as Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing. They also sold headbands and paper fashion accessories. Principal #6 pointed out, schools need to be careful of what values schools are supporting and promoting. A parent may not agree that the aforementioned Scholastic items are literacy sound or worthy of their money and may feel they distort gender socialization. However, a teacher may encourage the purchase of any of the mentioned items to receive free books. The Scholastic flyer advertises, “Every Order Form Earns FREE BOOKS for the Classroom Library!” (Scholastic, 2011, June, p. 1). Thus, a school’s desire for free books might cloud their judgement when encouraging students to buy Scholastic products.

In the past, Scholastic has also shown lack of judgement by promoting poor practices that harm the environment. In 2011 they promoted the use of coal as an energy resource to 4th graders through “The United States of Energy”
curriculum paid for by the American Coal Foundation.

Scholastic’s materials teach that coal is abundant and mined and burned for energy, but contain nothing about its impact on the environment and human health. Nothing about the hundreds of Appalachian Mountains leveled to get at coal seams. Nothing about the poisons released when coal is burned—like sulfur dioxide, mercury, and arsenic—which the American Lung Association says kill thousands of people every year. And nothing about the fact that burning coal is the single greatest contributor to human-created, climate-altering greenhouse gases. Whatever you think about mining and burning coal, there’s a clear difference between industry PR and teaching materials that are objective and genuinely educational.

(Campaign for a Commercial-free Childhood, 2011, para. 3)

After Scholastic’s curriculum was publicly criticized and campaigned against they issued an apology on May 13, 2011. “We acknowledge that the mere fact of sponsorship may call into question the authenticity of the information, and therefore conclude that we were not vigilant enough as to the effect of sponsorship in this instance. We have no plans to further distribute this particular program” (Scholastic, 2011, May 13, para. 1). Schools, boards and the Ministry of Education also need to question the effect of the mere involvement of sponsorships in schools. Scholastic often edges out other book companies because of better prices and kickbacks, but not because they necessarily offer better quality. It is unfortunate some public schools are bribed by Scholastic because their libraries lack resources and funding. Some teachers even organize monthly Scholastic book fairs (Schools #4, #5, & #8).

School commercialism is a real threat to the public education system on
many levels. It is up to the government and the Ontario Ministry of Education to acknowledge the research that shows the effective embedded influence of commercialism and to protect students from the promotion of an unhealthy lifestyle and the neoliberal agenda. The signs of what may come are glaring and dangerous to the public good and to our public goal of sustaining a healthy democracy. The initial steps of businesses are to approach students and their families as customers through school fundraising partnerships. In the long-term, corporations will market themselves as the solution to a failing and grossly underfunded public school system. They will offer parents and students private schools. A private school system will likely be a conflict of interest because they will prioritize profit instead of education. Turning over the public education system into the hands of the private sector will likely be a disaster. Research has already shown us that allowing commercialism into schools results in: biased curriculums that are profit driven, the promotion of a consumer and unhealthy lifestyle, a widening gap between rich and poor students, and an inequitable society. The next section will highlight how profit driven and aggressive the neoliberal agenda is in the public school system.

6.3 Neoliberal Agenda

Corporate interest in schools has a neoliberal agenda. “Advertisers are interested in youth and schools for the same reason that educators are so determined to work with young people; they are energetic, open minded, and still forming their world views...The increasing influence of youth marketing is easy for kids and teens to accept if they have never known any other way” (Norris,
The process of branding is easier when it starts in the schools. “Consumerism promotes the process by which the human being is depoliticized, students are reduced to passive spectators, and an active citizenry is transformed into complacent consumers” (Norris, 2011, p. 176). The focus is on training young vulnerable minds to serve the neoliberal agenda. A commercial free school would allow educators to be free from external agendas and to focus on what should be the true nature of education; to think critically and base decisions on healthy democratic values.

Corporations view schools as another profitable market to enter, control and privatize. They compete to enter the public school system under the guise of helping schools to raise funds, but their goal is profit driven. All corporations in this study had this objective: The Lunch Lady, Pizza Pizza, Boston Pizza, Subway, Scholastic, QSP and Cadbury. Even the companies who only donated money had this objective through their contract terms and conditions that required conditional funding (appropriation of space, signage and public disclosure): Canadian Tire, Banks, etc. These school partnerships provide branding opportunities from a young age and opportunities to promote consumer values. School partnerships, with corporations and philanthrocapitalists, also help corporations and individuals pay less tax to the government and shift the control over the lost revenues into the hands of the private sector who do not have students best interest at heart, or the expertise and experience in education.

Schools, just like corporations, are influenced by neoliberal principles and
are beginning to accept and integrate a business model in their quest to improve fundraising potential and efficiencies. For example, Principal #5 would like to establish PayPal for the school to increase profit and decrease school labour. PayPal would be a more efficient process for placing orders and collecting money than the current manual procedure, which involves teachers’ and reduces instructional time. The principal appeared frustrated because the board has not yet considered PayPal, but believes the Carleton Board already uses the service (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011). Another example was the consideration by TDSB to enter into a business relationship with Onestop Media. TDSB decided against expanding their business with Onestop Media beyond the pilot project because of moral considerations, but the door to do business with Onestop Media in the future has not been closed completely and the pilot project is still in effect (Lem, 2011, para. 5; McKeown, S., & Talbot, M., 2011, para. 2). Because the door is still open, it is very possible that as the need for school funds becomes more acute TDSB may capitulate on their current moral position and enter into a business relationship with Onestop Media, particularly if Onestop Media negotiates a more palpable proposition.

Schools use fundraising profit to fund the social service of public education, but corporations’ sole interest is in profit for its own sake. The Ministry of Education policies regarding corporate/school fundraising and partnerships does not ensure that corporate involvement with schools is benevolent, an unconditional gift to all schools. Even with strict policies corporations would still benefit because their donations would be considered a taxable allowance.
Turning a blind eye to increasing corporate involvement in the public school system implicitly supports the ongoing neoliberal political agenda. For the most part corporations have a free license to establish the terms and conditions of their relationship with schools and boards. The result is that corporations can better negotiate their school partnerships to increasingly influence and control the education system.

QSP, worth approximately $110 million US dollars, notably meets their business objectives through the school system (2009, Lexpert, para. 1).

“Up until now, there has been one major company in the magazine fundraising business, but now there are several out there competing,” says Robert Corley, director of publisher relations and magazine marketing for Great American Opportunities, one of those newer companies. “That’s a big change, and it has re-energized the industry.”

That “big” company was and still is QSP, a division of Reader’s Digest. While QSP is still the main supplier, they, too, can see that the market is changing. They, too, have begun to offer more to their clients.

“The need for what we do in schools is greater than it has ever been,” says Gary Rich, president of QSP Reader’s Digest. “School funding cuts are deeper. Discretionary dollars are fewer. That’s why the industry is so hot.”

(McCarthy, 2005, para. 7-9)

QSP takes a very aggressive and consumer approach to teaching students to sell their products, as their schools face deeper funding cuts. They conduct mandatory school assemblies designed to motivate students to sell their products. They promise prizes for top sellers (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011; Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011) and they provide students with
presentations on how to sell their products online (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011).

The Lunch Lady, another profit driven corporation, bribes the school boards and schools by offering a fundraising incentive to both the school and board. Carole Kreidstein, the Lunch Lady Group School Community Coordinator explained,

If your school is in the TDSB - the board (not the school) is given 2% of the cost of the lunch off the top. Then we in turn give the school the usual fundraising (35 cents less 2% of the cost of the meal or approx. 26 cents) per entrée. For our event lunches the board receives 2% off the cost of the lunch - the school receives $1 less 12 cents approx. for each entrée or about 88 cents if the school prints the menu...We are an approved vendor and have been for years with the board...We now have over 1,000 schools using Lunch Lady.

(C. Kreidstein, personal communication, September 16, 2011)

This information shows that The Lunch Lady and the board have an agenda for new customers, contrary to an agenda of encouraging both parents and students to pack a lunch. The Lunch Lady advertises and markets through their website and Facebook for new customers and Lady Lunch Franchise owners. These efforts are all profit driven. A Facebook post on November 9, 2010 indicated that nearly 50 franchises exist across Canada. They charge an initial franchise fee of $25,000 CDN plus GST and the cost of setting up a commercial kitchen and operating capital. “The Lunch Lady Group Inc. also collects Royalty fees, paid monthly at a rate of 8.0% of Gross Sales plus GST. Fees for our Marketing Fund are also paid monthly at the rate of 1.0% of Gross Sales plus GST. This Fund
covers all corporate marketing and promotional activities in support of The Lunch Lady Group" (The Lunch Lady, 2011, p. 2). Thus the Lunch Lady Group Inc. is a very lucrative business that relies on parents becoming dependent upon their catering services rather than taking the time to pack their child a lunch.

However appealing and convenient a Lady Lunch hot lunch may be it promotes a consumer ideology, unhealthy eating habits and could cause problems for the school boards. Their menu includes no fresh whole fruit, offers only one salad, a caesar salad, and promotes junk food, such as chocolate drinks, cookies, burgers, pizza, and pancakes and sausages for lunch. Also, some food portions are extremely tiny and expensive. The fact that schools and boards profit from The Lunch Lady lunch program could be perceived as a conflict of interest in vendor selection and because public schools and boards are endorsing a private catering company for their community, an audit performed on any Lady Lunch Franchise that reveals health violations might expose a board to legal liability. However, it appears that the profits from The Lunch Lady lunches are so lucrative that both individual schools and boards are willing to take the risks.

Canadian Tire is another profit driven company that is expanding their customer market through school partnerships. Schools provide specific marketing opportunities for research and branding and Canadian Tire is taking full advantage of these opportunities through their conditional funding Jumpstart charity program. They are moving their focus from the male, white, middle-aged Bob to market a more lucrative diverse group, more reflective of Canada’s
changing demographics. “So, the retailer is laying Bob to rest and, out of his ashes, developing a more diverse picture of its top spenders – one that includes urban women, younger consumers and new Canadians – who collectively account for just 20 per cent of its customers base but 75 per cent of its sales” (Strauss, 2009, p. 1). Therefore, in order for Canadian Tire to increase profits they need to expand their marketing and merchandising efforts to a diverse demographic, including visible minorities. One way they can do this is through Canadian Tire’s Jumpstart charity program, which exercises discretion in school partnership selection. From a neoliberal agenda standpoint it would be in their best interest to partner with schools that have the most lucrative customers to understand these customers better. The pending Jumpstart partnership with School #7, the most ethnically diverse school in this study, provides this opportunity (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011). The Jumpstart program also provides Canadian Tire with good public relations and tax breaks. However, these partnerships for schools are not healthy in the long-term because of their contract terms. Corporate partnerships in the long run fit the neoliberal agenda of shifting government control and financial responsibility to the private sector. For corporations this could mean turning schools into commercial enterprises.

Similar to Canadian Tire, Cadbury has specific marketing and merchandising efforts to secure new customers and maximize profits. Cadbury targets grades 4-8 students through their free chocolate factory school tours. Over 15,000 students participate in these tours in downtown Toronto annually (Cadbury, 2011, para.2). Cadbury also attracts public schools by offering their
merchandise at a discount for fundraising activities. They portray themselves as benevolent community partners, but at the same time promote child labour to make a profit on their goods and at every opportunity build name brand loyalty and future generations of Cadbury customers.

While corporations target schools for profit, schools due to lack of funds compete against each other and within their community to attract funds, including corporate partnerships. For example, Principal #1 said that when schools fundraise they are competing for money that other groups may need in their community and that schools should consider carefully why they need the funds. “I think sometimes that you can get greedy and you can just become a machine that just generates huge amounts of money and after awhile that’s not the purpose of the school” (Principal #1, interview, July 12, 2011). This greed is possible because no limit exists on how much money a school can fundraise. Principal #7 said his/her school has a video and a “Dream Team” to solicit donations.

A corporation is helping us do a video, which I think they did last week and the idea is that when we go to the private sector we show this video. We also have a group of kids who have trained called the Dream Team who do an actual skit to promote this and do presentations. They haven’t done it for the corporate sector yet but they’ve done it for a community club who have committed thousands of dollars to us. So there is advertising in that sense. We have done some publicity kind of events… we had press releases for and all that kind of thing. So yes there has been publicity for the big project.

(Principal #7, interview, August 8)
These comments show that there is an enormous amount of effort, time and drive that schools put towards fundraising and attracting donors. The increasing amount of time and effort applied by schools is no longer any different than those that invest in them and is purely profit driven. However, schools are doing it to supplement their ability to maintain an educational standard that is being eroded by government underfunding, while philanthropists and corporations are doing it for the sole purpose of growing their businesses.
Chapter 7 Conclusion

Public schools should be free from commercialism, the neoliberal agenda and the need to raise funds. A school’s responsibility needs to remain focused on education, not the endorsement or promotion of private businesses and profit driven agendas. Education cuts, whether imposed with an agenda or not, do pressure schools to compete and rely on corporate partnerships. The fundraising trend shows that the reliance of private money in the public school system is increasing with the threat of privatization. While it appears that corporations are operating with a high social conscience, they are ultimately only interested in increasing profits through these unhealthy relationships, where the school is vulnerable and dependent upon them for money because the government does not provide schools with sufficient funding. The public school funding shortage fits with the neoliberal agenda to shift public social services into an individual responsibility so that everything can become privatized for profit. Once this happens only the elite will have enough disposable income to enjoy life after paying for the necessary social services. The elite with their money and power are undermining democracy and eventually the vast majority of people will be living under the control of a very few powerful rich individuals. This has been highlighted recently by the global Occupy Movement, which speaks not only to the idea that an elite 1% of the population controls the remaining 99%, but also that the 99% are frustrated and fed up with being controlled.
PART 3 - Summary and Discussion

Part 3 – Summary and discussion highlights the key findings from the study, examines the current state of fundraising, an assessment of future fundraising trends, and whether it supports democratic values. Part 3 also makes recommendations about what can be done about fundraising in the public school system and provides a final conclusion.

Chapter 1 Key Findings from the Study

Fundraising was used as a tool by all principals to supplement their inadequate school budgets in order to support student learning and achievement. The many key findings from the principal interviews and school observation tours have been grouped into the relevant categories of Equity and Morality, Instructional Time and Curriculum, Fundraising Strategies, Funds Utilization, Student Achievement, and Principal Fundraising Buy-In and Neoliberalism.

1 Equity and Morality

This study showed that the socioeconomic status of a school’s neighbourhood impacted fundraising participation and results, thereby creating unequal educational opportunities between schools and students. The fact that most principals in this study are uncomfortable with fundraising, that schools are becoming increasingly dependant on corporate partnerships and exposed to their consumer ideologies for fundraising activities is morally problematic and in direct contradiction to Ministry of Education’s funding intention which “is meant to be equitable in order to provide equal educational opportunity for all students” (The Annual Report on Ontario’s Publicly Funded Schools, 2010, p. 26).
• “Sometimes it feels like we are constantly asking parents for money for one thing or another and that makes me uncomfortable” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011).

• The top four money-generating elementary schools collected a total of $567,630.00 compared to $45,308.00 for the bottom four schools.

• School Councils in affluent neighbourhoods fundraise a significantly larger amount of money than School Councils in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods (see Table 7). Schools #2, #7, #3, and #4, located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods, generated $0.00, $0.00, $2,000.00 and $1,500.00 respectively. In contrast, Schools #5 and #8, located in affluent neighbourhoods generated $35,200.00 and $34,000.00 respectively.

• “Kids in low socioeconomic schools should derive the same opportunities in a perfect world as kids in middle or high socioeconomic schools. Through school fundraising the rich kids are maintaining a level that they are already getting at home” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011).

• Ministry of Education’s Guideline for Fees for Learning Materials and Activities (2011) allows and encourages individual schools, through fundraising, to enhance or provide optional programming to their students (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 1) and by doing so, schools in affluent or higher fundraising neighbourhoods are able to offer their students a greater educational opportunity over those in poorer or lower fundraising neighbourhoods.

• This study shows a positive correlation between fundraised amounts and student achievement (see Table 4). However, student achievement only affects a small percentage of students and should not be used as the only measuring stick when considering the overall negative effects of fundraising.

• Field trips account for the highest fundraised amounts and not only are there inequities between schools from high and low fundraising neighbourhoods, there are often inequities between students at the same school.

Principal #3 stated that students who cannot afford the field trip cost were encouraged to participate in individual fundraising work, such as selling poinsettias, chocolate bars, and QSP magazine subscriptions. “Typically a child who may not have the funds they can do some fundraising and the school, the teachers will organize that where that they might sell poinsettias and then all of the proceeds from the sales that the child
makes go towards defraying the cost of their trip. Not a pool. Just an individual fundraising to that child. So that a child who can afford the trip, without doing the fundraising, doesn’t necessarily have to get involved in fundraising” (Principal #3, interview, July 14, 2011).

Principal #7 whose school is located in a low socioeconomic neighborhood where field trip participation is low commented, “So even with the [individual student] fundraising I don’t think it’s going to make a big difference in that many more kids going. A few more will go but I don’t think it will be a big difference” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011).

• Inequities exist within all schools because not all students can afford student fees, or the numerous products and services offered through fundraising.

• School-corporate partnerships promote an unhealthy lifestyle and a partnership based on dependency.

• Principals have issues with commercialism being present in schools as a result of fundraising.

1.1 Instructional Time and Curriculum

Fundraising requires a lot of labour at all levels, disrupts and reduces instructional time and the focus on learning. It also teaches an unhealthy informal curriculum.

• A school that runs two lunch fundraisers a week over a period of 30 weeks uses 15 hours of instructional time per teacher, per year for just the collection of money. One can only imagine what the collective total hours spent on fundraising per school would be if you added up the time spent on every single fundraising event. It is clear that the amount of time spent on fundraising by teachers is not only a waste of educational resources, but also an act of irresponsibility towards students who lose valuable instructional time.

• The QSP fundraiser, in addition to holding assemblies on school time, offers small prizes to students for reaching sales quotas. These practices present an unhealthy informal curriculum. “I don’t like QSP because it does promote commercialism and bribery and all that stuff and this junk stuff. This junk society we are in. I don’t like that” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011).
• The majority of school food partnerships promoted an unhealthy food informal curriculum: The Lunch Lady, Pizza, Subway, and chocolate.

• The promotion of commercialism at the elementary school level can also be an unhealthy informal curriculum. “Commercialism is potent for children and adults and I do not agree with commercialism in schools, especially elementary schools... When schools are constantly selling things there is a lot of peer pressure to these items” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011).

1.2 Fundraising Strategies

Some fundraising practices are in violation of the Ministry of Education’s best practices, which states “Fee amounts should reflect the actual cost of the service or materials being provided to the student” (Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 4) and a violation of the “IV. Accountability to the School Community” guideline (Ministry of Education, 2011, March, p. 5). The most popular fundraising strategy, the lunch fundraiser, teaches an informal commercialized curriculum.

• “So we always kind of round it up and we don’t make a ton of money. It’s not like at the end of the year I have $20,000 sitting in my non-Board account you know. It’s at the end of the year I might have a $1,000 or $2,000 sitting in my non-Board account because of these little extras. An extra dollar for an agenda, an extra 25 cents for a fieldtrip, but that extra $1,000 will help me pay for a trip to Quebec City, for something, for some child who can’t do something” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011).

• Seven of the eight schools used the lunch fundraiser as a fundraising strategy (see Table 6). When schools regularly sell fast food or junk food, students are inadvertently being taught an informal commercialized curriculum that these lunch choices are a healthy lifestyle choice without being presented the nutritional facts to support an informed decision.

1.3 Funds Utilization

Fundraised monies are being used to compensate for funding cuts. Low money-generating schools have limited arts, sports and extracurricular activities,
lower student engagement, less resources in their library, less and inferior school technology, less music instruments, fewer field trips, fewer professional performances, and poorer school grounds, compared to high money-generating schools.

- “The board is dealing with millions and millions of dollars in work that can’t be done due to Ministry of Education funding – thank the Mike Harris years for that” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011).

- “It is not fair that some schools are able to raise many more dollars than others – it only stands to reason that the big fundraisers can provide more opportunities and experiences for their students compared to the smaller [fundraising] schools” (Principal #2, interview, July 13, 2011).

- Fundraised money frees up the school budget to make certain purchases that the Ministry of Education doesn’t allow with fundraising dollars. “If some of the money we raised through fundraising went towards transportation, and I would typically spend $2,000.00 to $2,500.00 on transportation, then there’s $2,500.00 that I have in my school budget that I can spend on something else” (Principal #1, interview, July 12, 2011).

- Schools in affluent neighbourhoods collect more money for “major” field trips ($190,940.00) compared to schools in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods ($39,958.00) (see Figure A).

1.4 Student Achievement

Schools that raised larger amounts of money had higher student achievement when their funds were utilized to support student learning (see Table 3).

- All principals agreed that many of the items purchased through extra funds do increase student achievement.

- Schools #5, #6 and #8, located in affluent neighbourhoods, raised an average of $120.67, $345.56 and $177.00 per student respectively in fundraising amounts (including “major” trips) and overall experienced the highest levels of achievement in this study.

- Many schools are left with inadequate resources and as a result many students are educationally marginalized. Schools #1, #2, #3, and #4,
located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods raised an average of $52.92, $20.67, $42.59 and $31.75 per student respectively in fundraising amounts (including “major” trips) and experienced lower levels of achievement in this study.

1.5 Principal Fundraising Buy-In and Neoliberalism

It was evident from the principal interviews that not only have they resigned themselves to fundraising as an overall means to providing and maintaining high quality educational standards, in some cases they have actually become excited and thoroughly engrossed in the fundraising process and potential. Underfunded schools compete for limited resources by marketing themselves and accepting conditional funding from profit driven corporations.

- “Unfortunately with less and less money being given out to the schools, if you need items to improve your programming or start a new program, or reimburse your consumable items, like sports equipment, musical instruments, items for clubs, etc. fundraising is the way to go” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). School #7 is so engaged in fundraising potential they made a video to market themselves. “A corporation is helping us do a video, which I think they did last week and the idea is that when we go to the private sector we show this video. We also have a group of kids, who have trained, called the Dream Team who do an actual skit to promote this and do presentations” (Principal #7, interview, August 8).

- All corporations referred to in this study had a profit driven objective: The Lunch Lady, Pizza Pizza, Boston Pizza, Subway, Scholastic, QSP, Cadbury, Canadian Tire, Banks, etc. Corporate school partnerships involve conditions that can include appropriation of space, school time, under-aged and commission based sales representatives, public disclosure, and contract periods that amount to nothing more than conditional funding.

- The Lunch Lady in this study was found to be one of the most problematic school partnerships. In addition to doing business with a for-profit company, both the board and the school benefit because they receive a kickback from every dollar of food that is ordered through The Lunch Lady.

- Underfunded schools compete for limited resources. Schools, just like corporations, are influenced by neoliberal principles and are beginning to
accept and integrate a business model in their quest to improve fundraising potential and efficiencies. Schools are doing it to supplement their ability to maintain an educational standard that is being eroded by government underfunding, while philanthropists and corporations are doing it for the sole purpose of growing their businesses.

- None of the schools in this study were using their efforts to urge the province to ban fundraising altogether and fully fund public education.

- “I wish we could make a little bit more money because we are needy but it’s hard to do” (Principal #4, interview, July 18, 2011).

- “So I’m saying in terms of fundraising we need to look at better ways and there are ways of doing it” (Principal #7, interview, August 8, 2011).
Chapter 2  Overview of Fundraising

2  Current State of Fundraising

From 1995-2003 Mike Harris was the Premier of Ontario with the Progressive Conservative government. His government was integral in establishing a neoliberal agenda in Ontario’s public school system, which has continued to a lesser extent since then, by doing three things. To begin with, on June 12, 1996, his party passed Bill 30, the Education Quality and Accountability Office Act (EQAO), which implemented provincial standardized testing for grades 3, 6, 9 and 10. Secondly, on December 1, 1997, his party passed Bill 160 (Elementary Teachers of Toronto, 2011, October, p. 6), wherein school boards lost their ability to raise money through its property tax base to fund the public school system. With Bill 160 all money earmarked for education was sent to the province and it became the province’s sole responsibility to fund public education (Stodart, 2011, p. 3). Finally, Harris’ party cut education funding and school fundraising became an ongoing necessary activity in an attempt to sufficiently fund schools.

For the last 8 years a new Liberal government in the province of Ontario has not undone what Mike Harris’ party implemented and they continue to make education cuts. In effect, by not revoking Bill 30 and Bill 160 and continuing with education cuts, the Liberal government has adopted the neoliberal agenda. Ontario’s budget cuts to education funding are problematic for school boards across the province. For example, John F. Campbell, Chair, Toronto District School Board explained, “due to the latest budget, the Toronto District
School Board will now have to absorb $16 million in specific budget-line cuts to textbooks, computers and the professional development of teachers. More troubling is a $2 million cut to support special needs children and a $4.8 million (3.8 per cent) cut in Learning Opportunity funds used for educational assistants, school safety measures, social workers and outdoor education" (Campbell, 2009, para. 2). The continuation of education budget cuts further increases the need for fundraising activity. There is evidence to support that fundraising activity has increased during the last several years (People for Education, 2010; Krueger, 2007, pp. 47-48). Principals interviewed in this study also support this finding.

The increased need for fundraising has resulted in many fundraising strategies and opened the door for corporate-school partnerships. Table 7 (page 176) - Fundraising Strategies & Results provides a detailed breakdown of these strategies and results per school, whereas Figures B to I (pages 179-182), Fundraising Dollars by Category provides a visual account of fundraising strategies by category per school. Figures B to I are also merged together in Figure J (page 183) – Fundraising Dollars by School and Category. These figures include many corporate-school partnerships, such as Pizza Pizza, Boston Pizza, The Lunch Lady, Cadbury, QSP, and Scholastic. All of these relationships include conditional funding and for corporations they represent a business investment for the sole purpose of making a profit.

Principals have become creative in the ways they work within existing fundraising guidelines and policies in order to maximize results. In some cases they manipulate the system and in other cases they even flirt with violations. This
study revealed some principals charged for essential school items that are not allowed by the Ministry of Education, some charged fees in excess of actual cost, which is prohibited, and some used fundraised monies for school non-essentials, such as transportation, in order to free up their school budget for essential purchases, such as technology.

The pursuit of fundraising efficiency was important to principals. One goal was to protect teachers’ classroom time. One principal indicated they would benefit with the implementation of PayPal and another sought parental assistance from an affluent neighbourhood to lead a fundraising project for his/her school located in a lower socioeconomic neighbourhood. It was evident in this study that principals, regardless of their opinions and beliefs regarding fundraising, have bought into the concept, want to do the best for their students and are constantly looking at ways to do so without compromising their educational responsibility.

The benefits of fundraising for schools are that the utilization of additional money does support learning and student achievement. This was evident through the analysis of EQAO scores and information provided by the principals on the success of their music, athletic, literacy and math programs. Fundraised money was spent on extracurricular activities, field trips, and resources, such as books, technology, and music instruments. Money was also used for facility improvements. Table 3 (page 167) - How Money is Spent from Fundraising and Table 4 (page 171) - School Observation Tour both show differences between schools located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods versus affluent
neighbourhoods. The lower socioeconomic neighbourhood schools had fewer and inferior resources compared to the affluent neighbourhood schools.

Unfortunately the benefits of fundraising only apply to a significantly small percentage of students. Students attending schools in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods do not have the opportunity to benefit from the same resources, facilities, and field trips as students attending schools in affluent neighbourhoods. These students also have little or no resources at home and become marginalized in the public school system.

Furthermore, any time a school, student and their family is excluded or marginalized due to their inability to participate or succeed in fundraising activities, the potential for loss of dignity exists. In some cases, even when student participation in a fundraising activity is successful, the fact that student participation is based upon individual need can create a loss of dignity. It should be noted that not all students will accept the option of individual fundraising to fund their fieldtrip costs and of those who do there is no guarantee of success. All of this impacts the dignity of an individual and may have far reaching implications in other areas of their life.

The Ontario Ministry of Education does very little in the way of setting policy or firm guidelines to even out the playing field for fundraising so that all students benefit equally, thereby ensuring the financial and social disparities continue to grow between students and schools. Rather the Ministry gives individual school boards the latitude to set or not set their own policies, which leaves the door open for fundraising disparities and inequities. Additionally,
based on this study, the Ministry of Education does not have measures in place to ensure school board fundraising transparency and accountability. More importantly they continue to open their doors to corporate-school and corporate-board partnerships, allowing schools to be used for profit and allowing the school's formal curriculum to be undermined by an informal corporate curriculum and agenda.

Research shows that some schools even have autonomous charitable foundations.

Fundraising extends outside the school. Approximately thirty Toronto schools have autonomous, private foundations through which they raise funds for the school; none located to date are affiliated with more marginalized schools. These charitable foundations register as separate entities under the Canada Revenue Agency and are not subject to school board transparency and accountability measures. The impact of their fundraising efforts is not known...If we do not allow schools to collect fees and fundraise will this lead to a proliferation of charitable foundations that exist outside the school boards? How will these foundations be monitored?

(Social Planning Toronto, 2011, pp. 35-36)

These questions are very important and highlight another loophole for able schools. If the Ministry of Education is supposed to provide equal opportunities for all students then why are they permitting individual school and student fundraising, and why are they allowing schools to have autonomous, charitable private foundations?

2.1 Assessment of Future Fundraising Trends

The forecast of what's to come is bleak. Fundraising in the public school
system will continue to develop funding disparities in the public education system. Only a small percentage of students, from affluent neighborhoods, will benefit from the utilization of additional funds, but even these students will likely be adversely affected by the fundraising process and partnerships. All corporate-school partnerships are corporate business investments. It’s about gaining access to lucrative markets. The “poor schools are simply being used as a means to an end, as part of a strategy for companies to get their foot in the door before moving onto more lucrative markets where students and their families have more money to spend” (Norris, 2009, para. 4). Once public schools are heavily funded through conditional corporate fundraising, they are vulnerable to corporate interference and takeover.

Corporate involvement in schools is not benevolent or healthy. It is profit driven to serve the elite. Fundraising takes up school and personal time. Students are taught consumer and corporate values instead of civic values. Their critical thinking and life skills are eroded by consumer solutions and the buy-in to brand loyalty. Fundraising and corporate-school partnerships are a consumer solution to underfunded schools. The implicit promotion of junk food as a service to families and a lunch fundraiser conditions students into unhealthy eating habits that may be personally damaging and become a financial burden to our health-care system. For instance, a high sodium diet can be costly. “Hypertension already costs the health-care system $430-million a year, and experts say that number will grow exponentially if something isn’t done about the extraordinary amounts of sodium consumed by children across Canada” (Weeks,
A high consumption of junk food can also be costly. “Obesity is a risk factor in a number of chronic diseases…The proportion of obese children has nearly tripled in the last 25 years. The increases were seen for both boys and girls and across all age groups except pre-schoolers” (Health Canada, 2006, para. 1 & 3). Lack of school funding for physical activity also contributes to obesity.

There may also be an increase of safety issues surrounding fundraising. Online fundraising presents new safety challenges for students and families. Principal #6 said that QSP offers safety tips to students who fundraise (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011). Are parents and schools willing to risk safety to meet fundraising objectives?

The imposition of the business model on the schools is also problematic. School budgets focus on literacy and math so that they can increase test scores. Without funding for arts, music and athletic programs students are implicitly being taught that their schools do not value these programs, but schools do value these programs. They want their students to be well-rounded active citizens and therefore they include these programs in their fundraising rationale. When corporations partner with schools they appear benevolent, despite being solely motivated by profit. Because schools are very desperate for money, many corporations are let into schools despite their negative impact. Once business agendas are ingrained in the school system, schools and students will become corporate slaves.
2.2 Does Fundraising Support Democracy?

We are a democratic society and a true democracy is what the vast majority of people want. Egalitarian societies are healthier than unequal societies. A healthy democracy should include a fully funded public education school system to ensure all students have equal opportunities to attain the highest levels of student achievement without outside interference. Ontario’s Ministry of Education funding “is meant to be equitable in order to provide equal educational opportunity for all students” (The Annual Report on Ontario’s Publicly Funded Schools, 2010, p. 26). However, the public schools’ current funding is inadequate because it implicitly encourages fundraising that results in funding disparities and inequities. Schools do not have equal access or ability to fundraise. Fundraising campaigns also take up school instructional time, personal time, and introduce informal curriculums that are not Ministry approved. Leaving the door open for corporate-school partnerships serve the elite, not the students and an egalitarian society. Our economy and environment cannot flourish without democracy. We have seen the impact of corporate greed on schools and our society. It’s physically, socially and economically unhealthy. A fully funded high quality public education system would in fact pay future dividends to both individuals and our society. This decision would be extremely proactive, fiscally responsible and would serve the good of the many.

If schools remain underfunded, student social and achievement disparities will grow, and with time schools may suffer privatization. Privatization will mean less tax collected from the affluent and more stress on the vast majority of
families because most children of affluent families already attend private schools. School funding inequities will exacerbate and fundraising will run rampant. Corporate hunger for profit will grow and they will get aggressive with schools. Naturally, needier schools will agree to more fundraising conditions and terms set by corporations than less needy schools. These conditions and terms, as seen in past research, might include distasteful visible corporate signage, the implementation of biased curriculum resources, low profit margins for schools, more school assemblies to launch their products and campaign, the inclusion of junk food, vending machines and so forth. Research on the topic of school fundraising and the public outrage has made it clear that something needs to be done to end fundraising inequity and to ensure that corporate–school partnerships are not formed by corporations as a business investment to promote themselves and gain new customers.

2.3 How Can Fundraising Be Eliminated?

Ideally, the need for fundraising should end in the public school system with the government providing adequate funding. Social Planning Toronto (2011) has made a few recommendations to the Ministry of Education that would meet this objective.

Fund the education system so that it is not necessary for schools to rely on fundraising, fees and corporate partnerships – private money – to finance our public education system... Fund a vision for education, beyond targets for test scores and graduation rates that outlines what materials, activities and programs should be available at no extra charge to all students in every school in Ontario. This should include:
Appropriate learning materials for all courses, including hands-on technology, arts, health, physical education and computer courses
Access to extracurricular activities
Participation in arts and sports programs.
(Social Planning Toronto, 2011, p.3)

Funding for all students for all programs would be equitable and it would ensure a well-rounded robust curriculum. Since corporations and philanthrocapitalists claim to be benevolent public school supporters, one option would be for the government to introduce a corporate Education Tax and then distribute tax revenues equally to all schools.

Student, family, and staff time could be better spent in campaigning to have the government fully fund public schools rather than focusing their efforts on fundraising. In fact, if all public schools banned fundraising, the collective parent voice and pressure from students and schools would gain the necessary political support to sufficiently fund public schools.

Parents, through a class action lawsuit, could also file a human rights complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Social Planning Toronto (2011) in their report titled “Public system, private money: Fees, fundraising and equity in the Toronto District School Board” highlight a 2005 Ministry of Education settlement with Ontario’s Human Rights Commission. In the settlement the Ministry agreed “that every student should reach the highest level of achievement that his or her ability and willingness to work hard will permit (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2007)” (p. 32). Thus, reaching the highest level of achievement requires the Ministry of Education to do their part too. All
students, regardless of their school’s fundraising ability or results, need an equal opportunity, including enhancements such as field trips and technology, because enhancements have been shown to increase student achievement. Lack of student support may place the Ministry in violation of the 2005 settlement (Social Toronto Planning, 2011, p. 32).

Under Canada’s constitutional “Equality Rights”, every individual has an equal right and equal benefit of the public education system. “15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability” (Department of Justice Canada, 2011, 15. Equality Rights). Public school fundraising disparities could be deemed as violating Canada’s Constitution. For example, TDSB has segregated schools for students with developmental disabilities. These students have limited mental and physical abilities to fundraise and are dependent upon their teachers and other staff to bear most of the fundraising responsibilities. As an example, from being a teacher at W.J. McCordic School, a segregated special education school, out of compassion teachers and other staff organize fundraising activities and make many purchases, knowing their support is critical to raising money for the school.

Public school advocates, such as Canada’s People for Education and Ontario’s Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario, might be able to help gain funding for the public education system through court lawsuits against the
provincial government. In the United States some courts are ensuring public education receives adequate funds.

A number of judges have begun to respond to the devastation in state education financing: in May, the New Jersey Supreme Court ordered Gov. Chris Christie and the Legislature to reinstate $500 million in funds for poor urban districts, and last month, a North Carolina judge blocked cuts that would have decimated financing for a statewide preschool program...Politicians have a constitutional obligation to protect public education. They need to ensure that adequate public funds are available, and the people need to hold them accountable for doing so.

(Rebell & Wolff, 2011, August 25)

Initiatives of this type could gain ground in Canada’s provincial system, just as many initiatives begun in the U.S. find their way into Canadian political, legal, and corporate arenas.

As we work towards the government fully funding the public education system, there are ways the current public school fundraising disparities can be reduced and that fundraising student activity can be eliminated. Ontario’s Ministry of Education funding “is meant to be equitable in order to provide equal educational opportunity for all students” (The Annual Report on Ontario’s Publicly Funded Schools, 2010, p. 26). In a U.S. city, Portland, Oregon, public schools are required to pool one-third of money raised over $10,000 to redistribute amongst schools (Rushowy & Winsa, 2012, September 12, para. 10). There are some Ontario public schools that already help other schools by sharing money raised, but this is voluntary and usually reflects a small amount of money. The Oregon model is a good model for Ontario boards because it stipulates a
The Ministry could also stipulate that corporations and philanthrocapitalists donate equal amounts of cash to all schools within a board without any condition or reward from a school or board. If the donation is a resource or facility, it should be board inspected and approved, provided for every school within a board, and have no signage or biased curriculum agenda attached to it. The Ontario Ministry of Education needs to be sending a strong “we know best message” when it comes to education. They do not need outside interference that may potentially undermine the formal curriculum set out by the Ministry, which includes the values of democracy and civic duties. Partnerships formed by the Ministry with the community should not involve any profit driven agendas. They should be based on supporting the Ministry’s agenda of providing an unbiased high quality education to all students.
Chapter 3  Conclusion

The results of this study are that the positive benefits of fundraising do correlate with higher student achievement, but unfortunately these benefits only significantly apply to a small segment of the student population. Additionally, the utilization of raised funds to provide enhancements correlate positively with academic and/or athletic achievement and those achievements are relative to the amount of money a school has at its disposal. Schools in affluent neighbourhoods have more and superior resources and opportunities than schools in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods and this study shows how the disparities relate academically and socially.

The principals in this study used a variety of similar fundraising strategies to generate funds, such as lunch fundraisers, book fairs, and direct cash requests from parents. However, schools located in affluent neighbourhoods raised a significantly larger amount of money than schools located in lower socioeconomic neighbourhoods to support student learning. Overall, the schools in this study are becoming increasingly dependant on school-corporate partnerships for fundraising and as a result there is a growing informal curriculum based on consumerism. The informal curriculum includes brand loyalty buy-in and the promotion of unhealthy eating habits. All the negative results of fundraising make it obvious that school and student fundraising is not merited. All principals interviewed reflected that fundraising, although necessary due to lack of government funds, creates inequity between schools and students, takes up valuable school and student time, requires their management, and that the
resources and opportunities it buys for students does correlate with student learning. Principals were also aware that fundraising promotes commercialism, a “junk society” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011) and undermines a true democratic school system. In a true democratic society, “every student has the right to attend a school, where they are a qualified resident pupil, without payment of a fee” (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 1). However, the ideal of true democracy in public education is undermined when taking into account that according to the Ministry of Education’s Guideline for Fees for Learning Materials and Activities (2011), “school-generated funds” can be used to offer “enhanced or optional programming…or supplementary learning materials beyond the core curriculum” (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 1).

Research shows that because of government funding cuts, fundraising in schools has not only become the accepted norm, but is also increasing in an attempt to meet growing educational demands. The pressure to fundraise has become implicitly mandatory for schools in an attempt to provide a high quality education for all students. However, I have argued and provided evidence from the principal interviews, school observation tours and relevant research that the benefits of fundraising do not outweigh or merit the costs.
REFERENCES


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Ogilvie, M. (2010, July 29). The Dish: Jamaican beef patty is a ‘healthier’ fast


Vasagar, J. (2010, December 5). Finland's schools flourish in freedom and flexibility: State prescribes the curriculum but leaves teachers alone to decide how to teach the subject. Guardian.co.uk. Retrieved from on April 20, 2010 from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/05/finland-schools-curriculum-teaching


## TABLE 1

TDSB-YRDSB FUNDRAISING COMPARISON (2008-2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Top 20 Schools Total</th>
<th>Average per Student</th>
<th>Bottom 20 Schools Total</th>
<th>Average per Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TDSB (2008-2009)</strong></td>
<td>$4.4 million</td>
<td>$418.19</td>
<td>$103,000</td>
<td>$18.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YRDSB (2008-2009)</strong></td>
<td>$4.8 million</td>
<td>$398.78</td>
<td>$844,126</td>
<td>$168.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: (Toronto District School Board, 2008-09; York Region District School Board, 2008-09)
### TABLE 3

**HOW MONEY IS SPENT FROM FUNDRAISING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Neighbourhood, Grades, and Number of Students</th>
<th>Fundraising Total Amount</th>
<th>Who decides where the funds should be spent and how are the decisions made?</th>
<th>Utilization of Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 located in a low socio-economic neighbourhood K-8, 300 students</td>
<td>$15,875.00</td>
<td>The Parent Council in consultation with principal decides how to spend the $10,000 from the Halloween Dance-a-thon. Principal and staff decide how to spend the smaller fundraising campaigns (pizza). Principal and staff decide how to spend the smaller fundraising campaigns (Chocolate Bars).</td>
<td>- Graduation, Scientists in School, buses and taxis for sporting events. Some resources for the skipping rope club. - Help fund grade 8 field trip. - Office/teachers request for direct individual parent fundraising was used for “major” trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 located in a low socio-economic neighbourhood JK-6, 300 students</td>
<td>$6,200.00</td>
<td>The Fundraising Committee decides and the forms are submitted to Board. The Student Council, consisting of a few grade 5 students, led by a teacher from the Fundraising Committee decide how to spend the money the fundraised ($500.00) with final approval is needed by principal.</td>
<td>- One school performance a year, author visits, additional books for the classroom libraries. We high demand books, such as the Stilton books. Magazine purchases include Owl, Chickadee, National Geographic, and Know: The Science Magazine for Curious Kids. We also purchase items, such as a popcorn machine. Money is spent in one year. - Student Council one year they decided to have a school performance on bullying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 located in a lower middle socioeconomic neighbourhood JK-8, 385 students</td>
<td>$16,398.00</td>
<td>The principal and the staff decide how to spent the fundraising money.</td>
<td>- Each classroom has a Scientists in School presentation. - Theatrical productions for the whole school. - Helped to purchase grade 8 graduation awards and engraving. - Additional library resources. Sports equipment (consumables (balls, footballs, skipping ropes). - Individual student fundraising is used to offset his or her own field trip costs. - Office/teachers request for direct individual parent fundraising was used for “major” trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 located in a low socio-</td>
<td>$7,335.00</td>
<td>Budget Committee consists of the principal and a few teachers</td>
<td>- Smart boards. - Previous years to pay for Scientists in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Economic Neighbourhood: JK-6, 215 students

- They decide the areas of need in the school. Ultimately it’s the principal’s decision.
- School Council decides how they want their money spent. They try to compliment the Budget Committee, but they make the ultimate decision.
- Librarian.

### #5 Located in Affluent Neighbourhood: JK-8, 650 students

- School Council has a lot of control, but fortunately principal has been able to work well with them. Goal is to have money benefit the majority of students.
- Teachers decide how to spend their Scholastic money.
- School runs and decides how to spend the money raised through the grade 8 chocolate bar campaign.
- This school allows fees and field trips costs to be charged to parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School and for some music instruments.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Planning on purchasing a tent canopy for physical education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rotary Club money Leveled books for guided reading and library books.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Librarian spent Scholastic money on books for the library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sometimes $10 was given to each teacher to help buses or trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To reduce parent cost for camp and Medieval Times trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Office/teachers request for direct individual parent fundraising was used for “major” trips.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$78,440.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Money is spent on library, music program and 4 smart boards, scoreboard, playground (over $50,000.00), apples for students. The music program “hired a piano accompanist so the music teacher can focus on directing the choir and not having to play piano at the same time” (Principal #5, interview, July 23, 2011).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- With Scholastic money teachers buy books. One teacher bought a literacy table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- School Council plans to buy more smart boards and to purchase laptops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Every teacher selects an artist or Scientist in School for a half-day program for their classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Primary, junior and senior performances are decided by the teachers. For example, Little Red Theatre for the primary students. Done at least once or twice a year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Refs for our school teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sponsor students who can’t afford a trip. Example, paid for 4 students to go to camp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Planning to buy clickers for smart boards and $2,000.00 mural for gym.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Run scramble and spelling bee tournaments, a Walk-a-Child to School Day and Welcome Back Party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Money raised through the chocolate bar campaign was used to help fund the grade 8 camp trip, but students who sold more than one box of chocolates received more money according to their sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Office/teachers request for direct individual parent fundraising was used for “major” trips.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| #6 located in affluent neighbourhood 7-8, 360 students | $124,400.00 | Principal has priorities (technology).  
“The School Council can make decisions on how to spend "their" money but more often than not they ask for my input which also comes through the teachers' "wish list"” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011).  
“The student council decides on how they are going to spend their money under the supervision of the teachers who over see them” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011).  
This school allows fees and field trips costs to be charged to parents. | -Technology (data projector and 5 smart boards), and sport equipment (consumables).  
- “The $2,500.00 from the two concert fundraisers is used to maintain the school’s 300 music instruments and music books. The cost of repairing and replacing music instruments is huge” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011).  
- Computer, a school camera, having the stage painted, books for library.  
- Award plaques for grade 8 graduation  
- Fall school wide field trip day  
- Help fund trips for "needy families"  
- Student Council “Money is spent in different ways which include: donations (sometimes at Christmas they take on a needy family); a good cause, Terry Fox, countries that have fallen upon hard times because of a natural disaster; and they will spend it on areas around the school and equipment we may need” (Principal #6, interview, July 28, 2011).  
- Individual students fundraise to offset their own end of year major trips (Quebec City, Ski trip & Music Camp).  
- Office/teachers request for direct individual parent fundraising was used for “major” trips and school fees. |
|---|---|---|
| #7 located in a low socio-economic neighbourhood 6-8, Very large student population | $228,500.00+ | The principal’S last school revitalized their yard and his current school always had a need for green space. The yard revitalization committee consists of the principal, his partners from his previous school, current school’s community members (includes parents) and the staff Go Green Committee. The goal is fundraising 1.5 million and how it’s spent is driven by the project.  
This school allows field trips costs to be charged to parents. | Plan to:  
- build a running track, an outdoor amphitheatre, natural swamp, butterfly garden, fields for soccer, baseball, and cricket and practice cages for cricket and baseball, vegetable and herb garden, urban forest, bioswale  
- create a sport academy for soccer, cricket and baseball  
- Office/teachers requested direct individual parent fundraising for “major” trips. |
| #8 located in affluent neighbourhood 1-8, 770 students | $136,290.00 | The School Council decides all fundraising strategies. For School Council funds the School Council makes the decisions and then their Expenditure Committee prioritizes them.  
The school runs a minimal amount of fundraising activities and the office looks after that | School Council Funds  
- Scientists in classroom, some smart boards (planning to buy for every teacher with school budget as well), all smart board document cameras (planning to buy for every teacher with school budget as well), books for browsing boxes, paid for most of the $110,000.00 playground, 25 Lego Robotics, WeDo for the primary kids, Nintendo DSs |
and it goes into a non-Board Fund. The principal and the staff decide how to spend this money. This school allows fees and field trips costs to be charged to parents.

- Grade 3 teachers last year got $21,000.00 for their browsing boxes last year
- Music teacher last year got $6,000.00 and parent bought a tuba and donated it to music program
- Physical Education teachers last year got $2,000.00 to spend on equipment
- Parent cut cheque to pay for all the stuff the school’s hockey needs
- Food and drinks for events, such as track and field and Carnival Day
- Fund end of year “Fun Day”
- 2 canopies for sporting events (have to repurchase because previous ones were weak and broke on a windy day)
- Plan to purchase a scoreboard
- Funded the Lego Robotics club and Bridge Building Club and give School Council gives extra support to all extracurricular clubs, such as the Rainbows Club and Friends for Life Club
- Grade 8s fundraise to offset their end of year trip.

**Non-Board Funds**
- Some technology, such as Nintendo DSs
- PD for staff
- “We subsidize field trips for kids who can’t make it. Big trips like a trip to Quebec City. Subsidize graduation dance for kids that can’t pay” (Principal #8, interview, August 16, 2011).

**Office/teachers requested direct individual parent fundraising for “major” trips and school fees.**

**School Council Funds or Non-Board Funds**
- School jerseys

**Notes:**

All data is approximate due to availability of information.

* School #7’s data has been modified to protect school’s anonymity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Neighbourhood, Grades, Number of Students, and Fundraising Amount for School Year 2010-2011 (Excludes “Major” Trips)</th>
<th>#1 low socio-economic, K-8, 300, &amp; $13,000.00</th>
<th>#2 low socio-economic, JK-6, 300, &amp; $6,200.00</th>
<th>#3 lower middle socio-economic, JK-6, 215, &amp; $6,400.00</th>
<th>#4 low socio-economic, JK-8, 650, &amp; $50,000.00</th>
<th>#5 affluent 7-8, 360, &amp; $19,200.00</th>
<th>#6 affluent 1-8, 770, &amp; $78,990.00</th>
<th>#7 low socio-economic 6-8, Very large student population, &amp; $200,000.00</th>
<th>#8 affluent 1-8, 770, &amp; $78,990.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology - No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Technology - Lab: 30 old computers (7 old Macs and 13 old flat screens) - Each class: has one old computer. Library: 1 computer - No smart boards. - 8 Elmos - 6 Mobys will be purchased through school budget.</td>
<td>Technology - Lab: 30 old computers (no flat screens) that can’t support programs that are needed. - Each class: one computer. - 6 smart boards.</td>
<td>Technology - Lab: 30 flat screen Mac computers that are three years old. - Each class: unknown - Library: 1 smart board and a lab area - 4 smart boards - 6 laptops - Gym has a scoreboard. - Wi-Fi.</td>
<td>Technology - No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Technology - Lab: 2 school labs - Library: a few computers - Each class: 3 to 4 computers. - 10 smart boards - 150 Apple laptops divided into 3 moveable carts. - 60 iPads - 4 large screen TVs - Wi-Fi - Purchases online textbooks.</td>
<td>Technology - Lab: computer lab in library - Library: 10 flat screen personal computers and 30 brand new net tablets. - Each class: 2-3 flat screen computers - 9 smart boards - 16 smart document cameras - 75 laptops divided into carts of 15 to 20 laptops - 25 Lego robotic sets - WeDos - 1 large screen TV by office for school news - Wi-Fi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>Playground</td>
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<td>Playground</td>
<td>Playground</td>
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<td>Playground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground - No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Playground - Small simple playground.</td>
<td>Playground - No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Playground - Small basic playground that cost Board about $25,000.</td>
<td>Playground - 3 medium sized playgrounds. One costs $50,000 and is located by</td>
<td>Playground - No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Playground - Huge area of grass with two soccer net poles - Area with some</td>
<td>Playground - $110,000 playscape - Sitting area for outdoor class sessions</td>
<td>Playground - $110,000 playscape - Sitting area for outdoor class sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>No school observation tour.</td>
<td>No school observation tour.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size: medium with a wide variety of books but many worn out. - One computer. - School has a small &quot;Literary Room&quot; that is one third filled with books.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size: medium and half filled with books. - School budget was used for new carpet, painting the library walls, and shelves.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Size: huge and two-thirds filled with books with some shelving almost floor to ceiling. - A smart board and a lab area - Area for teens that is still in development - a reference area - Teacher area - Office area for their librarian. - Looks engaging. For example, furniture keeps evolving, such as new pillows and a new carpet for the primary students.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size: huge well stocked library - Area with a few computers.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No school observation tour.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size: huge space, extremely well stocked and in excellent shape - Area for 10 flat screen personal computers and 30 brand new net tablets, 25 Lego Robotic sets, and one huge apple flat screen - School also has a book room filled with over $200,000.00 worth of resources.</td>
<td>Double gym.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A nature trail. - 2 baseball diamonds - 1 soccer field - 1 garden. - Near a nature trail, water park, tennis court, additional basketball courts and a spider web.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cafeteria &amp; Vending Machines</th>
<th>Cafeteria &amp; Vending Machines</th>
<th>Cafeteria &amp; Vending Machines</th>
<th>Cafeteria &amp; Vending Machines</th>
<th>Cafeteria &amp; Vending Machines</th>
<th>Cafeteria &amp; Vending Machines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Logos</th>
<th>Corporate Logos</th>
<th>Corporate Logos</th>
<th>Corporate Logos</th>
<th>Corporate Logos</th>
<th>Corporate Logos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Achievement</th>
<th>School Achievement</th>
<th>School Achievement</th>
<th>School Achievement</th>
<th>School Achievement</th>
<th>School Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- School entrance hallway: Plaques for grade 6 students showing school year and school award. - No big trophies because</td>
<td>- School entrance hallway has plaques. - No trophies. - Gym: few pennants. Do not do well in sports because there is no money for transporta-</td>
<td>- Archives hallway includes photos spanning a period of about 100 years and 20 old and current trophies (academic and athletic).</td>
<td>- No school observation tour.</td>
<td>- Gym: Two to three pennants a year. One being in track and field. The school does not do well in sports because they are a lower grade heavy student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
expensive to buy.
- Gym: a few pennants, including some recent ones won within their Board for basketball, ultimate frisbee and bordenball.

- There are about 20 achievement plaques, covering all subject areas and sports. Students receive a personal plaque and their name is added to the school plaque or trophy.
- Gym: many pennants displayed and more that need to be hung. Last year school won 17 pennants.

- There are three $50 trust fund achievement awards given each year to graduating students.
- Throughout the school some student artwork is displayed.

- Names of students on the honour roll are posted on a wall outside of the office.
- Achieve one first place finish yearly in the Waterloo Gauss math competitions
- Very strong music program.

Notes:
- All data is approximate due to availability of information.
- School #7 can afford a greater amount of technology due to their large school budget, which is based on their very large student population.

Findings:
- Low money-generating schools have less and inferior school technology, less resources in their library and poorer school grounds, compared to high money-generating schools.
- There is a positive correlation between fundraised amounts and student achievement. School #7 is an exception because they have not utilized their fundraised dollars.
- Permanent corporate name signage to acknowledge corporate donations is an example of conditional corporate funding.
# TABLE 5

**EQAO Scores (2008-2009) - Comparison Between TDSB, YRDSB and Province Averages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TDSB Gr. 3</th>
<th>TDSB Gr. 6</th>
<th>YRDSB Gr. 3</th>
<th>YRDSB Gr. 6</th>
<th>Province Gr. 3</th>
<th>Province Gr. 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (EQAO, 2011, p. 1)
https://eqaoweb.eqao.com/pbs/Listing.aspx
## TABLE 7

**FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES & RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Neighbourhood, Grades, and Number of Students</th>
<th>Fundraising Strategies for School Year</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood K-8, 300 students</td>
<td>Halloween Dance-a-thon</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 8 individual student fundraising for their own camp trip (Chocolate Bar Campaign)</td>
<td>$1,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly Pizza Lunches</td>
<td>$3000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips (grade 8 camp trip)</td>
<td>$1,675.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertising Strategies: flyers to parents, sticker in agenda, posters in school</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$15,875.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood JK-6, 300 students</td>
<td>Pizza or Hot Dog Lunch three times a year</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday Read-a-thon or Walk-a-thon</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Librarian run Scholastic once a year</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Council (sell hug-a-grams, valentine treats, and eco bottles)</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Picture Company Rebate</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertising Strategies: teachers organize flyers to be sent home</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$6,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 located in a lower middle socioeconomic neighbourhood JK-8, 385 students</td>
<td>QSP</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Council run Monthly Pizza Lunches</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book Fairs</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly Hot Lunches (The Lunch Lady)</td>
<td>$550.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual student fundraising for their own trip, such as selling poinsettias.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips</td>
<td>$8,848.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertising Strategies: flyers to parents and regular monthly newsletter, a certain amount of assemblies for big fundraisers and school announcements</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$16,398.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 located in a low socioeconomic neighbourhood JK-6, 215 students</td>
<td>Principal run Cadbury Chocolate Fundraiser (22 day campaign)</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Council (sell yogurt, pizza lunches, school t-shirt and sweatshirts)</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rotary Club (a trustee helped with this)</td>
<td>$1000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Librarian run Scholastic</td>
<td>$900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Teacher Scholastic</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher fundraising for classroom trips (food related sales)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 6 students sell freezies to offset camp field trip</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips (camp)</td>
<td>$935.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Strategies: flyers to parents and school newsletter, morning announcements and teachers talk about it in their classrooms</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,835.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5 located in affluent neighbourhood</strong></td>
<td><strong>JK-8, 650 students</strong></td>
<td><strong>#6 located in affluent neighbourhood</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run QSP (magazines)</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Dance-a-thon</td>
<td>$7,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Craft Sale</td>
<td>$6,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Monthly Pizzas</td>
<td>$6,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Donations</td>
<td>$8,800.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Graduation Dance Fundraising</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some teachers request $5 to do special project.</td>
<td>* $2,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Acorn and Christmas Cards</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Playground fundraising</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run FundScrip Gift Cards</td>
<td>$1,200.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers do Scholastic for their classrooms</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School run Grade 8 Chocolate Bars Campaign for camp</td>
<td>$4,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Grade 8 Chocolate Bar Sales</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips (Camp and Ski Trip)</td>
<td><strong>$28,440.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Strategies: Use parents Gmail accounts weekly, flyers are sent home and ad in local paper, assemblies</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$78,440.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#6 located in affluent neighbourhood</strong></td>
<td><strong>7-8, 360 students</strong></td>
<td><strong>#7 located in a low socio-economic neighbourhood</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Supply Fees</td>
<td><strong>$9,200.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal run Coupon Book Campaign</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Student Council Dances</td>
<td>$2,875.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Concerts run by two music and a few other teachers</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Pizza Lunches</td>
<td>$875.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian run Scholastic Book Fair</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual student fundraising for their own trip (QSP)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips (Quebec City, Ski Trip &amp; Music Camp)</td>
<td><strong>$105,200.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Strategies: flyers/order forms to parents, posters in school, electronic newsletter through school website</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$124,400.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grants from different Foundations (TD Friends of the Environment &amp; Live Green Toronto’s Capital Fund)</strong></td>
<td>**** <strong>$200,000.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips (camp and Ottawa or Quebec)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$28,500.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Strategies: Writing and sending letters to secure grants from different foundations. Principal has informally got the support of a parent to help fundraise from his previous affluent school.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8 located in affluent neighbourhood</td>
<td>1-8, 770 students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School run smoothies and milk</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council weekly pizza &amp; Subway lunches</td>
<td>$27,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run QSP</td>
<td>$6,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian runs Two Book Fairs yearly</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 teachers run Scholastic monthly for their class</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office asks for $25 from each parent for School Performances</td>
<td>$19,250.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office charges an extra dollar for school agenda and rounds up trip cost to a dollar amount (example, charging $5 instead of $4.75)</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council run Grade 8 Fundraising (Babysitting at School Council Meeting, distributing pizza/Subway lunches and Boston Pizza servers)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Instrument User Fee</td>
<td>*** $9,240.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Individual Parent Fundraising for “Major” Trips (Quebec City and Camp Trip)</td>
<td>$57,300.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising strategies: group email to parents, flyers, posters</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$136,290.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

All data is approximate due to availability of information.

* School #5 – Some teachers request $5 to do a special project. It has been estimated that 400 students pay $5.00.

** School #6 – Student supply fees have been estimated to be $9,200.00.

*** School #8 – Students who do not own their own music instrument pay a yearly music instrument user fee of $40.00. It has been estimated that 30% of the students pay this fee.

**** School #7’s data has been modified to protect school’s anonymity.
FIGURES

Figure B – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #1

![Graph showing fundraising dollars by category for School #1.]

Figure C – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #2

![Graph showing fundraising dollars by category for School #2.]

Figure D – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #3

Note:
Student Individual Fundraising category has no dollar amount because data was not available.

Figure E – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #4

Notes:
Book Fair category should be higher, but not all data was available.
Food category should be higher, but not all data was available.
Figure F – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #5

Notes:
Book Fair category has no dollar amount because data was not available.
Student Individual Fundraising category has no dollar amount because data was not available.

Figure G – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #6

Note:
Student Individual Fundraising category has no dollar amount because data was not available.
Figure H – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #7

![Fundraising Dollars by Category - School #7](image)

Low socioeconomic neighbourhood
Grades 6-8, very large student population

Figure I – Fundraising Dollars by Category – School #8

![Fundraising Dollars by Category - School #8](image)

Affluent neighbourhood
Grades 1-8, 770 students

Note:

Food category should be higher, but not all data was available.
Figure J – Fundraising Dollars by School and Category

Notes:

All data is approximate due to availability of information.
School #3 - Student Individual Fundraising category has no dollar amount because data was not available.
School #4 - Book Fair category should be higher, but not all data was available.
School #4 - Food category should be higher, but not all data was available.
School #5 - Book Fair category has no dollar amount because data was not available.
School #5 - Student Individual Fundraising category has no dollar amount because data was not available.
School #6 - Student Individual Fundraising category has no dollar amount because data was not available.
School #8 - Food category should be higher, but not all data was available.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

Date

To the participants in this study,

The purpose of the study is to learn about the different fundraising strategies principals use in public elementary schools and what the impacts of fundraising are on these schools. The title of the study is “The results and implications of fundraising in elementary public schools: Interviews with Ontario principals”. Four principal volunteers from elementary public schools with low levels of fundraising and four principal volunteers from elementary public schools with high levels of fundraising will be selected for this study. This study is part of my academic program and there is no funding. Participation in this study is voluntary.

This M.A. thesis will be carried out in Toronto under the supervision of Professor Trevor Norris, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. The data is being collected for the purposes of a M.A. thesis. The research results may be published or used to make a public presentation in the future, but will ensure
During this study you will have a chance to reflect on the fundraising process, your role, and the results of fundraising. This will be a great opportunity for you to reflect and share your thoughts, observations, and any relevant data. This information will be useful to the principal participants, other principals, school boards, and the Ontario Ministry of Education. The benefits of this study may include information to inform fundraising policy development, professional development for school staff, and social justice activism. The scholarly community will benefit from the study by gaining information about fundraising from the principal’s perspective and gaining information about the positive and negative results of fundraising.

The principal interviews will take about one to one and half-hours and the school observation tour will take up to a hour, and can be done with or without your accompaniment. I will email you the interview questions after I receive your signed informed consent letter so that you may prepare ahead of time if you would like to. I will arrange a 20-minute telephone meeting with you prior to the interview to review the interview questions, answer any questions you have, and to book the principal interview and the school observation tour. During the interview you will be asked questions about your school’s need for fundraising, your role as a fundraiser, fundraising strategies used, and both the positive and negative impacts of fundraising. As the interview proceeds, I may ask questions for clarification or further understanding, but my part will be mainly to listen to you speak about your views, experiences, and the reasons you believe the things
you do. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you are not comfortable with or withdraw from the interview process. No value judgments will be placed on your responses nor will any evaluation be made of your effectiveness as a principal. I will conduct my school observation tour by walking through your school and will utilize the observational checklist attached to make notes (Appendix C). Should I need any clarification I will ask you at the end of my tour. You may also refuse the school observation tour if you are not comfortable it.

It is the intention that each interview will be audio taped and later transcribed to paper; you have the choice of declining to have the interview taped. You will be assigned a number that will correspond to your interview and transcription. Your transcript will be sent to you to read, along with your school’s observation data in order for you to add any further information or to correct any misinterpretations that could result. The information obtained in the interview and school observation tour will be kept in strict confidence and stored at a secure location, locked in the investigator’s home office desk drawer. Only the thesis investigator and supervisor will have access to the information obtained. All information will be reported in such a way that individual persons, schools, school districts, and communities cannot be identified. You may also request that any information, whether written form or audiotape, be changed or eliminated from the study, especially any information that may compromise anonymity. All raw data (i.e. transcripts, field notes) will be destroyed (via shredding) five years after the completion of the study.
This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Boards of the University of Toronto. If you have any questions related to your rights as a participant in this study or if you have any complaints or concerns about how you have been treated as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Ethics, ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273. A well, please feel free to contact me at [cell number] or at vana.pistiolis@utoronto.ca, or my thesis supervisor, Dr. Trevor Norris at 416-978-1201 or at trevor.norris@utoronto.ca should you have any questions about the research and your involvement with it.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Vana Pistiolis
M.A. Thesis Candidate, Theory and Policy Studies in Education
University of Toronto
Email: vana.pistiolis@utoronto.ca

Dr. Trevor Norris
Professor, Theory and Policy Studies in Education
OISE/University of Toronto
252 Bloor St. W, 6th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 1V6
Email: trevor.norris@utoronto.ca

By signing below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in the study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions above.
Name: ___________________________ School: ___________________________

Signed: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Please initial if you would like a summary of the findings of the study emailed to you upon completion: _____

Please initial if you agree to have your interview audio taped: _____

Please initial if you agree to the school observation tour: _____ With your accompaniment: _____ or Without your accompaniment: _______

Please keep a copy of this form for your records.
APPENDIX B

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are all of the fundraising strategies currently used at your school and how are these decisions made?

2. How much on average does your school raise annually from fundraising?

3. Which fundraising strategies raise the most and what are the dollar amounts?

4. Do your fundraising strategies include securing additional funds through corporate donations, gifts and sponsorship? If so, do corporations seek anything in return for their funding?

5. Do you employ advertising strategies and if so, what are they? E.g. emails, flyers, posters, local paper, etc.

6. Who decides where the funds should be spent and how are the decisions made?

7. What is the additional funding spent on? E.g. books, programs, computers, trips, snacks, long-term projects etc.

8. Do you believe that the benefits of additional funds from fundraising have an impact on overall academic achievement and if so, can you provide evidence to support this?

9. Do you believe the number and types of extracurricular activities and participation rates have increased as a direct result of the application of additional funds raised through fundraising? What is the evidence you use to support?

10. Are there any ways that fundraising detracts from the focus on teaching and learning?

11. Do you think commercial activity in schools promote certain values? If yes, please explain.

12. Are there commercial activities you have rejected or not pursued because the costs outweigh the benefits? Please explain.

13. Do you think anything about the aims of schooling is compromised or influenced by fundraising?
14. Are there any additional benefits from fundraising and, if so, what are they?

15. Are there any negative impacts of fundraising at your school and, if so, what are they?

16. Is it equitable that some schools can raise more funds than others? Please explain.

17. Would you recommend fundraising to other principals? Why?
APPENDIX C

SCHOOL OBSERVATION TOUR

Notes will be made concerning the following:

Technology (e.g. computer lab, library, classrooms)

Playground

Gym Facilities (e.g. equipment, space)

Library (e.g. size, resources, computers)

Cafeteria and Vending Machines

Corporate Logos

School Achievement (e.g. trophies, rewards)
**Main Research Question:**

What kinds of different fundraising strategies do principals use in select elementary public schools in a Southern Ontario large city and what are the positive and negative results of fundraising?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-questions:</th>
<th>Broad Concepts</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What fundraising strategies have been used at these schools?</td>
<td>Diverse fundraising initiatives and labour involved.</td>
<td>Parents, teachers, students, corporations. Selling products, partnerships, providing a service, donations.</td>
<td>Questions 1, 4, 5</td>
<td>Categorical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How are funds raised at these schools used?</td>
<td>Resources. Decision makers.</td>
<td>Technology, books, equipment, curriculum experts, arts and sports programs. Principal, parents, teachers, students, corporations.</td>
<td>Questions 6, 7</td>
<td>Categorical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. From the principal’s perspective, what are the positive and negative results and implications</td>
<td>Resources, programs and teamwork. Student academic</td>
<td>Student achievement, EQAO scores, Extracurricular activities and</td>
<td>Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17</td>
<td>Categorical. Qualitative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>