Applying to TDSB Arts-Focus Specialized Programs

November 19, 2025





How to Participate





Click **Q&A** at the top of screen; then type your c in the window.



Some questions may be answered directly in the Q & A.

This meeting is being recorded.



Closed
Captions are
available in
English and in
other
languages.





Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions and Meeting Norms
- Land Acknowledgement
- How to Apply for a Specialized Arts Program
- Uploading Demonstrations of Knowledge and Skills for Arts Programs
- The Selection, Admissions Process and Timelines
- Helpful tips to Prepare a Visual Arts Portfolio or Audition Video
- Questions and Answers, Posting of Q and A after the meeting



Introductions

Louise Sirisko - Associate Director of Student Learning and Equitable Outcomes **Diana Panagiotopoulos** - Executive Superintendent, Student Achievement & Pathways

Central Program Admissions Office

Amalia Pallas - Senior Manager
Reiko Fuentes - Centrally Assigned Principal
Afroditi Andreopoulos - Administrative Assistant
Anna Catalano - Administrative Liaison

Guidance, Career Development & Student Well-Being

Allan Easton - Centrally Assigned Principal **Snezana Bacanin** - Coordinator of Guidance

Communications & Public Affairs

Ryan Bird - Executive Officer **Stacey Lewis -** Manager, Strategic Communication

Central Staff

John Chasty - Special Projects
Linda Edwards - STEM, ICT, Global Competencies, Assess. & Eval.
Patricia Davies - e-Learning
Peter Gazzellone - Continuing Education

Ronnie Lebb - IT and Tech Support

The Arts

Susan Pitre - Centrally Assigned Principal Miranda Blazey - Program Coordinator Ruwani de Fonseka - Lead Teacher Will Snodgrass - Lead Teacher



Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe (A NISH NA BEE), the Haudenosaunee (HOE DENA SHOW NEE) Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognize the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

Reconnaissance des Terres Traditionnelles

Nous reconnaissons que nous sommes accueillis sur les terres des Mississaugas des Anichinabés (A NISH NA BEY), de la Confédération Haudenosaunee (HOE DENA SHOW NE) et du Wendat. Nous voulons également reconnaître la pérennité de la présence des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuit.



Important Information

- Before submitting any application, students, parents/guardians and caregivers are encouraged to attend all relevant Open Houses to learn more about the programs
- If you require support with your application, or don't have access to the necessary technology, please contact your child's current school for support.
- If a student opts to not continue in a program, they must return to their designated school by address
- Transportation is the responsibility of the applicant. Before applying to a school, please visit the school via public transportation
- All TDSB Specialized Programs are in person



Navigating the TDSB Website



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Translate

EARLY YEARS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL

ADULT LEARNERS

PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

COMMUNITY

The Backpack & School Supplies Drive

This school year, contribute to a student's confidence, preparedness and sense of belonging with a backpack of supplies.

MAKE A DONATION





School Year Calendar



Find Your School



Transcripts & Student Records



Continuina Education





Find Your School tdsb Toronto District School Board



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EARLY YEARS HIGH SCHOOL ADULT LEARNERS **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** PARENTS & CAREGIVERS COMMUNITY

Find your...

▼ School

By Home Address

- ▶ By School Name
- ► Out-of-Area Admissions

Elementary Programs

Secondary Programs

Alternative Schools

e-Learning Programs

French Programs

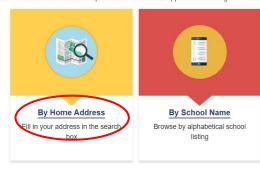
Special Education and Inclusion Programs

▶ Registration

PDF Map

Find Your School

Find your designated school by entering your address, see school contact details and find out who your principal, viceprincipal, superintendent and trustee are. Also explore other educational opportunities through the TDSB.





Central Program Admissions Office

The Central Program Admissions Office coordinates and facilitates the application and enrollment processes for TDSB Central Programs listed below.



Specialized Programs

The TDSB offers Specialized Programs that are boused on the Arts, Math, Science & Technology, Leadership and more! All students meeting the eligibility requirements with an est in the program focus as



Out-of-Area Admissions

Applying to attend a school other than your designated school by address



Elementary Specialized Arts Programs

Calculator

Additional Resources

There are four TDSB Elementary Specialized Arts Programs:

- Claude Watson School for the Arts (4-8)
- Karen Kain School for the Arts (6-8)
- Charles H Best Middle School (6-8)
- Don Mills Middle School (6-8)



25 NOV. TUE All day

UPDATED Specialized Programs Application (Day 2/19)



Specialized Programs Website

tdsb.on.ca/specializedprograms

TDSB Secondary Specialized Programs:

- Arts
- International Baccalaureate
- Leadership Pathway
- Math, Science and Technology





Specialized Programs

The TDSB offers Specialized Programs that are focused on the Arts, Math, Science & Technology, Leadership and more! All students meeting the eligibility requirements with an interest in the program focus are invited to apply. Please note that the application and admissions process has changed. Visit the <u>Applications and Admissions website</u> for more information.



The application for September 2026 will be open from Monday, November 24 to Friday, December 12, 2025 at noon.

Learn more about upcoming Virtual Information Sessions for Specialized Programs

Learn more about each of the programs:

- Arts
- International Baccalaureate
- Leadership
- Math, Science and Technology

Please note that transportation is not provided for any Specialized Program.

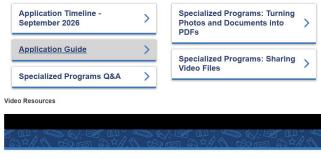
Learn more about:



Specialized Programs Q&A

Additional Resources

Additional Resources Website



Overview of TDSB Specialized Programs





Applicant Eligibility

Applicants are eligible to apply for Specialized Programs if, at the time of application, they:

- meet the age, residency, and citizenship or eligible immigration status requirements to attend a TDSB school as set out in the Admission Eligibility Requirements (PR518); or
- are currently registered at a TDSB school

The parent/caregiver must be actively residing in Ontario. The address provided in the application must be the one where the family lives.

All applicants (secondary) must meet the report card benchmark in order to be eligible.

Report Card Benchmark

Secondary Program Eligibility

In order to be an eligible applicant, the following Grade 7 or Grade 8 report card marks will be reviewed, and no more than 2 can fall below the Provincial Standard (70%):

Language History

Math French (average of 4 strands)

Science and Technology Art (average of 4 strands)

Geography Physical and Health Education

(average of 2 strands)

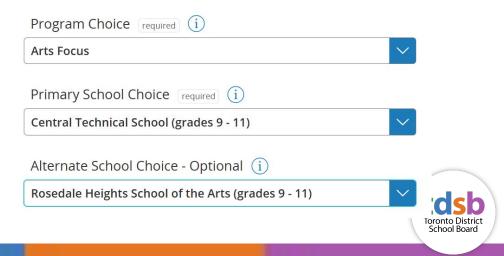


Applying to TDSB Specialized Programs

Each applicant may select ONE program type for their application.

Applicants list their primary program school. Where applicable, applicants may opt to include an alternate program school.

The alternate program school MUST be of the SAME program type.



Applying to TDSB Specialized Programs

Alternate choices will only be considered after all primary applications for that program from the City of Toronto have been considered.

If an applicant is accepted to their primary choice school, they will not be considered for their alternate choice.

If an applicant is offered a spot in their alternate choice, they will remain on the waitlist for their primary choice.

What you need to apply

- Student Legal Name, Date of Birth and gender
- Primary Home Address (the address where you currently reside)
- Current School and Grade, and <u>Student Number</u> (TDSB students only)
- Primary Program/school of choice and alternate choice (if applicable)
- Contact information of the parent/legal guardian/caregiver



What you need to apply

 Applicants to secondary programs who were not in a TDSB school in June 2025, will need to upload a PDF of both of their report cards from the 2024-25 school year (not the fall interim report card).

Please upload a copy of the student's report card from June 2025. If the achievement from Report 1 (Feb 2025) is not shown

in the June 2025 report card, please upload the February report card as well.

Check this box if you do not have report cards from the 2024-25 school year.

2024-25 Final June Report Card required (file format: PDF Only)

Upload...

 Applicants to Arts Programs (elementary and secondary) will need to upload either a portfolio or an audition with their application.

General Arts-Focus Programs

- Applicants will submit either a portfolio or an audition video
- Any of the Arts rubrics can be selected by the applicant
- All strands of the Arts and Language will be considered as part of the applicant score

Westview Centennial SS Rosedale Heights SFA Woburn Collegiate Institute

Seneral Entry Arts Prog	rams Visual Arts	Performing Arts	Other Specific Arts Areas	
School/Program	Marks Included i	n Applicant Score	Demonstration of Knowledge a Skills	
Rosedale Heights SFA Woburn CI Westview Centennial SS	Average of the four arts marks as well as Language		Audition or Portfolio Dance Audition Rubric Drama Audition Rubric Music Audition Rubric Musical Theatre Audition Rubric Visual Arts Portfolio Rubric	

Visual/Digital Arts Programs

- Applicants will submit a portfolio
- All submissions will be evaluated using the Visual Arts Portfolio rubric
- The Visual Arts strand and Language will be considered as part of the applicant score.





Performing Arts Programs

- Applicants will submit an audition video, and can choose their arts focus rubric
- Language and the listed Arts strand(s) will be considered as part of the applicant score





Specific Arts Programs

- Applicants will submit an audition video which will be evaluated with the appropriate rubric
- Language and the listed Arts strand(s) will be considered as part of the applicant score

General Entry Arts Programs	Visual Arts	Performing Arts	Other	r Specific Arts Areas	
School/Program	Marks I Score	Marks Included in Applicant Score		Demonstration of Knowledge an Skills	
Earl Haig SS - Music	Average of	Average of Language and Music		Audition Music Audition Rubric	
Earl Haig SS - Dance	Average o	Average of Language and Dance		Audition Dance Audition Rubric	
Earl Haig SS - Drama	Average o	Average of Language and Drama		oudition Orama Audition Rubric	
Etobicoke School of the Arts Drama/Film	Average (Average of Language and Drama		audition or Portfolio Orama Audition Rubric Visual Art Portfolio Rubric	

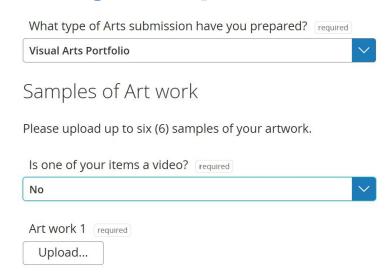
Toronto District

Secondary Portfolio

Artwork

Up to six (6) images of artwork that can be uploaded from your computer

Applicants can include the link to one (1) video film recording, saved on a Google Drive, shared so "anyone with the link" can "View"





Secondary Portfolio

Reflection

Up to 300 word reflection, saved as a PDF to upload or the link to a video/audio recording up to 90 seconds in length, saved on a Google Drive, shared so "anyone with the link" can "View"

Reflection Please resubmit the piece of art which is described in your reflection. Is your reflection a PDF with up to a maximum of 300 words or a 90 second audio/video file? Please select: required PDF Reflection upload required Upload...



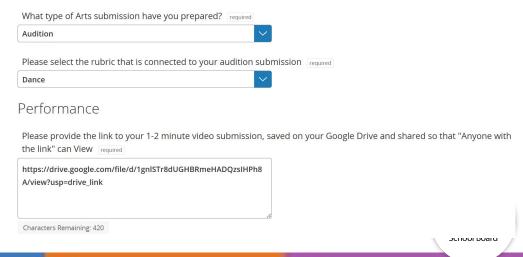
Secondary Audition

Performance

The link to one (1) video recording (up to 2 minutes), saved on a Google Drive, shared so "anyone with the link" can "View"

The applicant selects the type of audition video that has been included:

- Dance
- Drama
- Music
- Musical Theatre



Secondary Audition

Performance Reflection

The link to a video/audio recording (up to 90 seconds), saved on a Google Drive, shared so "anyone with the link" can "View"

Performance Reflection

Provide the link to your video/audio Performance Reflection submission, saved on your Google Drive and shared so that "Anyone with the link" can View (link box) required

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gnlSTr8dUHBRmeHADQzsIHPh8A/view?usp=drive_link



Submitting Auditions and Portfolio

If you are applying to two (2) Arts programs of the same type, only one uploaded audition / portfolio can be submitted. If you submit a second, only the first will be considered.

Primary Choice Central Technical School Visual Arts Program

Portfolio

Alternate Choice Etobicoke School of the Arts Contemporary Arts Program

Portfolio

One portfolio submission only



Submitting Auditions and Portfolio

If you are applying to two (2) Arts programs of different types with different requirements, two uploaded audition / portfolio will be required.

Primary Choice Wexford Collegiate Visual Media Arts Program

Portfolio

Alternate Choice
Wexford Collegiate
Performing Arts Program

Audition

One portfolio and one audition are required



Submitting Auditions and Portfolio

If you are applying to two (2) Arts programs with multiple options, *if your* submission for your primary program meets the requirements for your alternate, then only one submission should be uploaded.

Primary Choice Earl Haig SS Dance Program

Dance Audition

Alternate Choice Rosedale Heights

Audition or Portfolio

Only the dance audition should be uploaded



Demonstrations of Knowledge and Skills for Arts Programs

Arts:

The specific detailed criteria for each type of Arts submission, the submission requirements and the rubric(s) can be found on the <u>Academic Achievement</u> and <u>Demonstration of Knowledge and Skills</u> website.



Demonstrations of Knowledge and Skills for Arts Programs

IMPORTANT:

Applicant submissions must adhere to all TDSB policies and procedures, including P031 - Human Rights.

Submissions that contravene TDSB policies and procedures, including the TDSB Code of Conduct will be addressed, and the application will be deemed incomplete.

Demonstrations of Knowledge and Skills for Arts Programs

IMPORTANT:

Arts portfolio and audition written and spoken reflections must be prepared without the use of any generative artificial intelligence.

All content is to reflect the applicant's independent and original work.



Applying to TDSB Specialized Programs

- Once started, the application can be saved along the way. There is no reminder to complete and submit if the application is incomplete.
- Students and their parents/guardians and caregivers should make every effort attend all appropriate Open Houses before making a final decision about program choices
- Once submitted, the application cannot be changed
- The application closes Friday, December 12, 2025 at noon

IT IS NOT A FIRST COME FIRST SERVE APPLICATION.



Admissions to TDSB Specialized Programs

- Students applying for entry in Specialized Programs will be seated based on their demonstrated knowledge and skills
- For Secondary Programs, report card achievement data from the previous year will also play a factor
- Applicants with the highest scores will be seated first
 - 30% report card achievement
 - 70% demonstration of knowledge and skills
- For Elementary Programs, only the demonstration of knowledge and skills will be considered



The Selection and Admissions Process

Applicants will be seated in programs based on their applicant score (report card achievement + demonstration of knowledge and skills).

The process will occur centrally and all communication will come via email from the Central Program Admissions Office. Please do not contact schools directly for selection results.

- February 11, 2026 Acceptances and waitlist status will be <u>sent centrally</u>, via email, to all applicants. Offers expire February 17, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.
- Offers will continue to be made, where vacant seats are available, on the
 18th and 25th of February

The Selection and Admissions Process

NOTE:

- There is no sibling priority for Specialized Programs
- Students already attending an elementary Specialized Program are not given priority for secondary programs
- There is no priority for local applicants
- Students that live in the designated area for a school that offers a Specialized Program must still apply through this process if they wish to participate in the program

Questions?



Elementary/Secondary Visual Arts Criteria

- Applicants upload up to 4 images (elementary) or 6 images (secondary) of finished or in-process Visual Arts work.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to dedicate one of the uploads to sketchbook pages, notes, or images that demonstrate planning and artistic process for a completed or in-progress piece.
- Visual Arts may include design concepts, animation, film, or artwork created using any artistic medium (e.g., drawing, painting, sculpture, digital art) or digital media—or a combination of both—and may include one film or video between 15 to 120 seconds in length.

Elementary Process Reflection

Select one of your submitted pieces of artwork.

- Using a maximum of 200 words or a one minute video/audio recording describe your artwork by answering the following questions:
 - Why did you create this art?
 - How did you create this art?
 - What did you do well?
 - What would you do differently next time?



Secondary Visual Arts Reflection

Select one of your submitted pieces of artwork.

Applicants are to submit a description of up to 300 words or a 90 second video/audio recording (maximum) describing how the artwork was completed which could include:

- Methods and materials used;
- Technology used (if applicable);
- Your ideas or thinking behind the art; and
- Identifying one challenge you faced creating this artwork and how you overcame it

Elementary Performing Arts Criteria

- Applicants are to submit a video of 1-2 performances/excerpts
- If more than one performance is included, the two recordings must be edited into a single video
- Up to 2 minutes in length
- Must be a solo performance of your choice that best represents your skills and artistic ability
- The audition example(s) could come from any performing arts focus areas including dance, dramatic arts, music, and musical theatre



Elementary Performing Arts Reflection

Using a maximum of 200 words or a one minute video/audio recording, describe your performance(s) by answering the following questions:

- How did you create this performance?
- What did you learn from this performance?
- What did you do well?
- What would you do differently next time?



Secondary Performing Arts Criteria

Applicants are to submit a video of 1-2 performances/excerpts:

- If more than one performance is included, the two recordings must be edited into a single video;
- Up to two (2) minutes in length; and
- Must be a solo performance/excerpt of your choice that best represents your ability.



Secondary Performing Arts Reflection

Applicants submit a video/audio recording of a maximum of 90 seconds, outlining the process and purpose of the performance(s) including:

- Why did you choose this performance(s)?
- How did you prepare for the performance?
- What were you most proud of in your performance video?
- Identify one challenge you faced in your performance and how you overcame it.



Notes for Applicants:

Visual Arts applicants will not receive a lower score if they decide to submit fewer than 6 images (4 images in elementary) in their application.

Assessors may conduct an online image/performance reverse search to verify authenticity, if deemed necessary.

Previous arts professional training is not a requirement. We are looking for potential in the arts. Work in progress can be used for portfolios/audition videos.

Visual Arts Portfolio Tips 1

- Ensure that you are submitting a portfolio which meets the correct criteria.
- Your portfolio is a collection of your best art/design work that showcases your creativity, curiosity, thinking, and skill and should be a visual representation of who you are.
- Visual Arts elementary/secondary rubrics are posted online as a reference on the website (for teacher use).
- Remember that this is your chance to make an impression!



Visual Arts Portfolio Tips 2

- Generate interest and excitement with the first piece/video in your submission.
- Include work in 2D, 3D, design, digital or traditional art types; all forms of work are acceptable.
- Include an example of drawing/video from direct observation, such as life/still life, interiors and landscapes.
- Ensure that any photographs of your work are well-lit on plain backgrounds.
- Include at least one of your process work/sketchbook(s) as a multiple page PDF or a brief video.



Visual Arts Tips 3: Sketchbook/process work/rough work

- Your sketchbook/process work can be a multi-page PDF or video that you can upload. This is where we get to see your thinking ideas and process.
- Your sketchbook/process work could relate to one of your finished works, or may not be related. There is no advantage to either approach.
- Sketches are just one type of rough/process work. Feel free to include research, creative journaling, notes, rough drafts, experiments, doodles, photos, and more! If you're working digitally, you could screenshot your process work to include it.

Secondary/Elementary Audition Tips 1

- Submit a performance(s) which meets the correct criteria.
- Start your video with "Hello, my name is and I am auditioning for (Drama/Music/Musical Theatre/Dance)".
- Your audition is an opportunity to showcase your creativity, curiosity, thinking, and skill and should be a visual/auditory representation of who you are. It is your chance to make an impression!
- Record in any location with good lighting and avoid backlight (a mobile device camera works). Avoid using the "selfie" front camera mode (reverse issue); use the rear camera.

Secondary/Elementary Audition Tips 2

- Videos are not to be professionally edited.
- The face and body of the applicant must be visible.
- Other individuals cannot be present in the video picture frame.
- The performance(s) must be recent (from 2025).
- If text/lyrics are part of the performance, they should be memorized (secondary only).
- Performing Arts elementary/secondary rubrics are posted online as a reference on the website (for teacher use).

Dramatic Arts Audition Tips

- The video could be a monologue (one person speaking), a dialogue (where other speakers are off camera), spoken word, or movement-based (physical theatre).
- Your role/character should maintain focus/concentration during the performance. What does your character want?
- Ensure you are well prepared for your performance (rehearsal, familiarity with text, etc.).
- Use gestures or facial expressions to communicate your character.
- How are you connected to other characters/the audience?
- Establish a sense of time and place in the performance.



Musical Theatre Audition Tips

- Consider an excerpt from any song that shows strength in both singing and storytelling, from the musical theatre catalogue or any music genre (i.e. pop, folk).
- Remember that in addition to singing the song, you are telling a story as that character.
- If you use a recorded instrumental track or live accompanist make sure that your voice is easy to hear above the track.
- Choose an excerpt from any song(s) that highlights your voice.
- Understand your character and connect to the text.
- Consider your facial expression and how it communicates the text.



Dance Audition Tips

- Review the <u>Elements of Dance</u> in the <u>Ontario Arts Curriculum</u>.
- Research dance styles and steps, choose steps that highlight your skills.
- Practise filming yourself and polish your steps.
- Utilize your full energy and range of motion, even in limited spaces.
- Remember to smile! Wear comfortable attire for easy movement.
- You can use music or dance in silence.
- You should not be in one spot the entire time. Show some shifts of weight, changes in direction, and some locomotor (travelling) movement.
- Stay focused, have fun, and allow your love for dance to shine through!



Music Audition Tips

- Choose an excerpt from song(s) of any style you are passionate about that portrays your performance strengths
- An instrumental piece could be a section that features your specific part prominently within a group performance (e.g., the guitar part of an ensemble piece, a cello part of an orchestra piece) or a solo
- A vocal or instrumental solo could be unaccompanied or performed with a prerecorded background track or live off-camera accompaniment
- Be sure your interpretation of the music comes through by paying attention to dynamics, phrasing, and articulation
- Ensure your body and/or instrument are fully visible in the video



Questions?



Additional Resources Website

- Video recording of this presentation
- Slides used in this presentation
- Specialized Program Q & A (already posted)

https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cpao/Central-Program-Admissions-Office/Specialized-Programs/Additional-Resources

