



Caring and Safe Schools: Annual Report 2023-24

To: Program and School Services Committee

Date: 5 June 2025

Report No.: 06-25-4911

Strategic Directions

- Commit to the Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action
- All Students Belong, are Engaged, and Valued in an Inclusive Environment
- All Students Reach High Levels of Achievement, Success, and Personal Development
- All Students Graduate with the Confidence, Skills, and Knowledge to Thrive
- All Students and Staff Learn and Work in Inclusive, Safe, and Modern Environments

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Caring and Safe Schools: Annual Report 2023-24 be received.

The annual Caring and Safe Schools Report presents an overall summary and an analysis of the suspensions and expulsions that occurred in the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) during the 2023-2024 school year. This report includes two key TDSB documents, the Caring and Safe Schools (CSS) Annual Report 2023–2024 and the Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety-Update June 2025. It also provides an update on the progress made with the recommendations pertaining to Caring and Safe Schools put forward through the review conducted by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario in 2024. Together these reflect how the TDSB’s commitment to fostering safe, equitable, and inclusive learning environments, highlighted by an emphasis on restorative and relationship-based practices—aligned with anti-racism and anti-oppression frameworks—is transforming school culture and student outcomes.

Additionally, they underscore a deepening collaboration between schools and community safety partners and reflect the Board's proactive efforts to strengthen equity-centred approaches to student behaviour and school safety. Emphasizing early intervention, restorative practices, and trauma-informed care, the work of CSS is increasingly collaborative—engaging internal departments, community agencies, and City partners to respond effectively to the evolving needs of school communities.

Key Findings

In the 2023-24 school year:

- There were 5,441 suspensions and 20 expulsions in the school year. When compared with the 2018-19 school year (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic), there were 91 fewer suspensions, or a 2% reduction in the 2023-24 school year. There were also 10 fewer expulsions (a 33% reduction);
- The overall student suspension rate is 1.63%;
- There were 23 suspensions in the primary grades (Kindergarten to Grade 3);
- Hallways, classrooms, and school yards continued to be the most likely incident locations;
- 39.9% of the suspensions were one-day suspensions;
- Fighting (17.9%), aid/incite harmful behavior (14.3%), and physical assault (14.2%) were the top three infraction types;
- 97.8% of the suspensions were followed up with interventions. A meeting with parents or guardians was the most used intervention, followed by restorative practices;
- Male students accounted for 72.0% of the suspensions/expulsions;
- Students with special education needs (excluding Gifted) accounted for half (49.5%) of the suspensions/expulsions;
- Students who were born in Canada or spoke English as the primary language at home accounted for the majority of suspensions/expulsions;
- Students who lived with one parent (particularly with mother only) or were from low-income families had disproportionately high representations in suspensions/expulsions;
- Self-identified Black, Middle Eastern, and Mixed students continued to be disproportionately high in suspensions/expulsions.
- Self-identified Indigenous students accounted for fewer than 10 suspensions.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Our ongoing focus is to ensure that all schools are safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive. Central to this goal is building strong relationships with students—understanding who they are helps us create learning environments that reflect their lived experiences and meet their individual needs. This work is grounded in our

commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression.

As part of removing systemic barriers, TDSB continues to inform students and families of suspensions that have been expunged as part of the revised retention schedule included in PR 697.

Several recent developments have contributed positively to our efforts, including updates to the Caring and Safe Schools database to improve how “infraction type” is categorized, a continued focus on professional learning around the impact of identity on student discipline, the growth of community partnerships, and the expansion of programming beyond regular school hours.

To support school administrators, teams of retired principals have been deployed to schools to provide administrative leadership, guidance, mentoring and coaching in support of building greater accountability and enhancing compliance in the areas of Caring and Safe Schools policy and procedure, building positive school climate, facility infrastructure. To date, 25 schools have been engaged in this process.

Most recently as outlined in the “Action Plan” contained within the *Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety* referenced earlier in the report, TDSB has invested even further in safety by making additional investments in the areas of staffing, provision of programming, community engagement and technology (school security and infrastructure).

To support student achievement and well-being, reduce suspensions and expulsions, and address the disproportionate representation of certain groups in disciplinary actions, we will continue to:

- Continue implementing the action plan outlined in *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety* to address community and school violence;
- Partner with families and community organizations to develop tailored support strategies for students;
- Address the intersection of identity factors—such as race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, special education needs, and gender—and how they influence student discipline decisions;
- Analyze suspension and expulsion data in detail to identify trends, patterns, and opportunities for improvement;
- Support the Caring and Safe Schools team and school administrators in examining bias, power, and privilege within the student discipline process;
- Guide school administrators in applying the principles of Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, anti-racism, and anti-oppression in student discipline practices;
- Review Caring and Safe Schools practices to ensure alignment with anti-racism and anti-oppression principles;

- Provide mandatory training for staff on restorative practices, threat assessment, and emergency preparedness;
- Develop and implement alternatives to suspension programs;
- Collaborate with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement to challenge unconscious bias, engage in joint problem-solving, and ensure equitable treatment of Indigenous and Black students in disciplinary decisions, through partnerships between principals and superintendents;
- Consider and address the intersectionality of data in this report, ensuring that Board Special Education staff are involved in analyzing student discipline matters to identify and eliminate biases in the process;
- Continuing to implement the recommendations as outlined in the report Toronto District School Board: Safety, Financial Management and Capital - Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, 2024.

Resource Implications

Ongoing investments are required to effectively meet the needs of students and schools. Key resource areas include increased staffing—particularly Social Workers, Child and Youth Workers, and Caring and Safe Schools Advisors—to support early intervention and case management. Continued funding for professional learning is also critical to ensure educators and administrators are equipped to apply restorative and culturally responsive practices. Additionally, system upgrades to enhance technology infrastructure, data collection and incident tracking are needed to improve safety monitoring and accountability. Finally, resource allocations are necessary to support the implementation of recommendations from external reviews focused on student and school safety including the provision of programming outside of regular school hours.

Communications Considerations

The Caring and Safe Schools report will be shared with key stakeholders through existing TDSB communication channels.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

P037 Equity

P031 Human Rights

P051 Caring and Safe Schools

P069 Accessibility

PR523 Access to School Board Premises

PR540 Non-Discretionary and Discretionary Student Transfers

PR585 Board Code of Conduct

PR586 Programs for Students on Long Term Suspension or Expulsion
PR602 Hearing of and Appeal Under Section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act
PR608 Sexual Misconduct by Students
PR694 Video Surveillance
PR695 Threat to school Safety
PR697 Promoting a Positive School Climate Procedure
PR698 Police-School Board Protocol
PR703 Bullying Prevention and Intervention
PR702 Progressive Discipline
PR710 Reporting of Suspected Wrongdoing
PR728 Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in Schools
PR724 Refusal to Admit

Appendices

- Appendix A: Caring and Safe Schools: Annual Report 2023-2024
- Appendix B: A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety – Update June 2025
- Appendix C: Toronto District School Board: Safety, Financial Management and Capital - Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, 2024

From

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CARING AND SAFE SCHOOLS REPORT

2023 - 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The annual Caring and Safe Schools Report provides a comprehensive overview and analysis of suspensions and expulsions within the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) during the 2023–2024 school year. The data shared in this report serves as a vital resource for fostering a positive school culture and supporting evidence-based decision-making and accountability efforts across the system.

Schools must be safe, welcoming spaces where all students and staff feel respected, included, and valued in their learning and working environments. At the TDSB, we are committed to cultivating these positive environments, recognizing their significant impact on student achievement and well-being. By addressing the role that student discipline plays in shaping school climate—and acknowledging how discipline can influence students' educational pathways and outcomes—we are working to create lasting, positive change. When serious incidents occur, appropriate disciplinary measures, as outlined in the Education Act, Ministry of Education guidelines, and Board policies, are applied, including the possibility of suspension and/or expulsion.

In reviewing the data presented in this report, it is critical to identify patterns that deepen our understanding of student discipline practices. This analysis must be conducted through an equity-focused lens, aligned with the Board's commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, anti-racism, and anti-oppression. It is essential that the data is not used in ways that stigmatize or reinforce harmful stereotypes about individual students or groups. Instead, the data should be used to critically examine and challenge Board policies, procedures, and practices, addressing both systemic and individual biases within student discipline processes. These biases can contribute to academic streaming and differentiated outcomes for students based on factors unrelated to ability or effort.

There were 5,441 suspensions and 20 expulsions in the 2023-2024 school year. The overall student suspension rate was 1.63%. For the purpose of drawing appropriate comparisons, in this report the data from the 2023-2024 school year is compared to 2018-2019, the last full school year that was not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. When compared with the 2018-2019 school year (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic), there were 91 fewer suspensions, or a 2% reduction, in the 2023-2024 school year. There were also 10 fewer expulsions. Additional data related to suspensions and expulsions in the TDSB is found throughout this report.

Research from the pre-pandemic years shows a strong correlation between student suspensions and lower academic achievement. Students who were suspended consistently demonstrated lower performance on provincial standardized assessments, report cards, and credit accumulation compared to their non-suspended peers. Moreover, their graduation rates were significantly lower. While overall five-year cohort graduation rates in the TDSB remained above 80% between 2006–

07 and 2016–17, only 50% of students who had been suspended during that period graduated with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). These findings highlight the need for a thoughtful, reflective, and collaborative approach to suspensions to support the success of all students.

Addressing both suspension and expulsion data, along with the systemic barriers embedded within student discipline processes, is crucial to helping more TDSB students realize their full potential. To this end, staff are implementing an action plan that focuses on building strong, positive relationships with both internal and external partners. This work aims to create school climates where all students and staff feel valued, heard, and supported, regardless of their identity or socioeconomic background.

Context

At the Toronto District School Board, we are deeply committed to creating positive, inclusive environments, recognizing their crucial role in supporting student success. By directly addressing the impact of student discipline on school climate—and acknowledging its influence on steering students toward particular pathways and outcomes—we are working to create meaningful, lasting improvements in students' lives.

Guided by our Multi-Year Strategic Plan, our efforts have focused on several key actions:

- Analyzing past suspension data to identify trends, patterns, and areas for improvement;
- Supporting the Caring and Safe Schools team in examining issues of bias, power, and privilege within the student discipline process;
- Assisting school administrators in applying the principles of Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, anti-racism, and anti-oppression to student discipline practices;
- Reviewing Caring and Safe Schools procedures to ensure alignment with anti-racism and anti-oppression principles; and
- Expanding learning opportunities for staff through training in restorative practices, threat assessment, and emergency preparedness

Through the focused efforts of the Caring and Safe Schools team, school administrators have been engaging in professional learning aimed at deepening their understanding of the lived experiences of their students. This work has not only enabled principals to more thoughtfully exercise their informed discretion and confront their personal biases when considering alternatives to suspension, but it has also helped them proactively identify and remove barriers to create safer, more inclusive, and equitable learning environments.

A positive school climate is the foundation for building trust, fostering high expectations, and promoting a strong sense of belonging. We remain committed to emphasizing programs that encourage and support positive behaviour, enabling early interventions that better engage and support students. Through this ongoing strategy, we aim to create safer, more welcoming schools for all students and staff.

Addressing Systemic Barriers

When reviewing the data in this report, it is crucial to identify patterns that provide deeper insights into student discipline processes. This analysis must be approached critically, taking into account the Board's commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, equity, anti-racism, and anti-

oppression. It is important that this data is not used to stigmatize or reinforce harmful stereotypes about individual students or groups. Instead, the data should be leveraged to examine the Board's policies, procedures, and practices, identifying and challenging both systemic and individual biases that exist within student discipline processes. These biases can contribute to academic streaming and create differentiated outcomes for students based on factors unrelated to their abilities or efforts.

It is essential to recognize that students may be suspended or expelled when their behavior warrants such disciplinary action.

Under the Education Act, suspension (and consideration for expulsion) is required for the following offenses:

- Possessing a weapon, including a firearm
- Using a weapon to cause or threaten bodily harm to another person
- Committing physical assault that results in bodily harm requiring medical attention
- Committing sexual assault
- Trafficking in weapons or illegal drugs
- Committing robbery
- Providing alcohol or cannabis to a minor
- Engaging in bullying (if the student has been previously suspended for bullying and their continued presence in the school poses an unacceptable risk to another person's safety).

Additionally, the TDSB mandates suspension (and possible expulsion) for the following offenses:

- Possession of an explosive substance
- Sexual harassment
- Racial harassment
- Hate-motivated incidents
- Distribution of hate material
- Acts deemed by the principal as serious breaches of the Board's or school's code of conduct
- Trafficking in cannabis
- Extortion

Suspensions – Students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3

In compliance with the Ministry of Education direction the TDSB has eliminated discretionary suspensions for students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 (Education Act s. 306). These students may still be suspended for behaviours as outlined in s. 310 of the Education Act.

This systemic change has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of suspensions for primary school students and thus addresses the resultant impact of streaming which is connected to student discipline processes.

Reducing Suspension Rates for Indigenous Students, Black Students, and Students with Special Education Needs

Self-identified Indigenous and Black students have been suspended at rates significantly higher than their representation within the broader TDSB student population. To address this disparity, the Caring and Safe Schools team will continue to collaborate intentionally with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement. This collaboration ensures that discipline issues involving Indigenous and Black students are analyzed through an anti-racism and anti-oppression framework, with a focus on centering anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism in all discussions and decisions related to student discipline for these students.

In response to this critical issue of systemic racism, Board staff are actively working to implement identity-based strategies. The entire Caring and Safe Schools team is engaged in ongoing anti-racism and anti-oppression training, specifically addressing anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism. This training is provided to staff both formally and informally and is complemented by additional mandatory training opportunities throughout the school year (see Section I).

Indigenous Students

It is of critical importance to continuously engage Indigenous Communities with respect to discipline of self-identified Indigenous students. The Caring and Safe Schools team engages staff at the Urban Indigenous Education Centre to ensure that to the greatest extent possible these discipline proceedings are informed by Indigenous ways of working, knowing and being.

There were fewer than 10 suspensions issued to self-identified Indigenous students in the 2023-2024 school year.

Black Students

Historically, Black students in the TDSB are suspended at a rate approximately three to four times that of their representation within the broader student population. While the data shows a rate reduction since 2018-19 there was an increase when compared to data 2022-23. Caring and Safe Schools staff will continue to work closely with the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement to deepen their learning related to how anti-Black racism manifests itself in student discipline proceedings. In turn, their work with school administrator colleagues will extend their learning in ways that deepen their capacity to arrive at decisions which are more equitable for all students.

Students with Special Education Needs

The Caring and Safe Schools team is collaborating closely with Special Education staff to address the data indicating that students with special education needs have been suspended at higher rates than their representation in the broader TDSB student population. As part of this effort, the action plan will continue to focus on the intersectionality of the data, particularly regarding student identity. Special Education staff are actively involved in analyzing student discipline matters, ensuring that potential biases in the discipline process are identified and addressed, and that all relevant factors, including mitigating circumstances, are thoroughly considered.

Suspension/Expulsion Retention Schedule

TDSB continues to address system barriers through the implementation of the TDSB Retention schedule included in PR 697: *Promoting a Positive School Climate*. To date 12382 discipline records have been expunged.

Key Findings

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- The overall student suspension rate is 1.63%;
- There were 23 suspensions in the primary grades (Kindergarten to Grade 3);
- Hallways, classrooms, and school yards continued to be the most likely incident locations;
- 39.9% of the suspensions were one-day suspensions;
- Fighting (17.9%), aid/incite harmful behavior (14.3%), and physical assault (14.2%) were the top three infraction types;
- 97.8% of the suspensions were followed up with interventions. A meeting with parents or guardians was the most used intervention, followed by restorative practices;
- Male students accounted for 72.0% of the suspensions/expulsions;
- Students with special education needs (excluding Gifted) accounted for half (49.5%) of the suspensions/expulsions;
- Students who were born in Canada or spoke English as the primary language at home accounted for the majority of suspensions/expulsions;
- Students who lived with one parent (particularly with mother only) or were from low-income families had disproportionately high representations in suspensions/expulsions;
- Self-identified Black, Middle Eastern, and Mixed students continued to be disproportionately high in suspensions/expulsions.
- Self-identified Indigenous students accounted for fewer than 10 suspensions.

It is important to note that while the number of suspensions and expulsions in the 2023-24 school year dropped slightly in comparison to the 2018-19 school year, the number of incidents requiring intervention from the Caring and Safe Schools team increased in the 2023-24.

In order to interrupt this trend, the *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Report 1* and the Action Plan connected to it were received at the Special Meeting of the Board on December 9, 2022. On February 1, 2023 the Board received *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Report 1 – Budget Implications* which specified additional investments associated with the Action Plan presented at the Special Board Meeting on December 9, 2022. On May 24, 2023 the Board received *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety – Board Update - May 2023*. The Board received the latest update on the *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety* in June 2024.

A: Student Suspensions and Expulsions in 2023-24

Table 1 shows the overall suspension and expulsion information for TDSB elementary and secondary students throughout the entire 2023-24 school year¹. The suspension rate² was calculated as the number of students suspended during the school year divided by the student enrolment as of October 31st.

Table 1: Suspensions and Expulsions in the 2023-24 School Year

Panel	Total # of Suspensions	# of Students Suspended	Suspension Rate (%)	# of Expulsions
Elementary	2,510	1,733	1.06%	0
Secondary	2,931	2,158	2.90%	20
Total	5,441	3,891	1.63%	20

Table 2 shows the overall suspension and expulsion information in the last four school years excluding the two pandemic school years (2019-20 and 2020-21). For a more detailed analysis of trends in suspensions/expulsions, please see Section D, Suspensions and Expulsions by Student Demographics, of this report.

**Table 2: Suspensions and Expulsions in the Last Four School Years
(excluding the two pandemic school years)**

Panel	School Year	Total # of Suspensions	# of Students Suspended	Suspension Rate (%)	# of Expulsions
Elementary Schools	2018-19	2,578	1,720	0.99%	0
	Pandemic	-			
	2021-22	1,641	1,222	0.76%	0
	2022-23	2,189	1,556	0.95%	0
	2023-24	2,510	1,733	1.06%	0
Secondary Schools	2018-19	2,954	2,186	2.99%	30
	Pandemic	-			
	2021-22	1,864	1,404	1.98%	20
	2022-23	2,718	2,082	2.88%	14
	2023-24	2,931	2,158	2.90%	20
Elementary and Secondary Schools	2018-19	5,532	3,906	1.58%	30
	Pandemic	-			
	2021-22	3,505	2,626	1.13%	20
	2022-23	4,907	3,638	1.54%	14
	2023-24	5,441	3,891	1.63%	20

Table 3 shows the number of suspensions and suspension rate for each grade/division in the 2023-24 school year.

Table 3: 2023-24 Suspensions by Student Grade/Division

Grade	# of Suspensions	# of Students Suspended	Suspension Rate
Junior Kindergarten	1	1	0%
Senior Kindergarten	0	0	0%
Grade 1	1	1	0%
Grade 2	6	6	0.04%
Grade 3	15	10	0.06%
Primary Division	23	18	0.02%
Grade 4	217	132	0.79%
Grade 5	321	223	1.33%
Grade 6	523	361	2.15%
Junior Division	1,061	716	1.42%
Grade 7	665	472	2.96%
Grade 8	761	527	3.17%
Intermediate Division	1,426	999	3.07%
Grade 9	878	629	3.79%
Grade 10	903	639	3.68%
Grade 11	616	449	2.49%
Grade 12	534	441	1.96%
Senior Division	2,931	2,158	2.90%

B: Details of the 2023-24 Suspensions and Expulsions

This section provides details of the 2023-24 student suspensions and expulsions, such as incident locations, infraction types, and police involvement. This information can be used when planning for conduct management, prevention-oriented strategies, mediation, and violence prevention at the school, Family of Schools, Learning Centre, and Board levels.

Hallways (23.2%), classrooms (19.9%), and school yards (18.4%) were the most likely locations where incidents were to happen (Figure 1). The “Other” category (17.8%) includes spaces such as student washrooms, virtual learning settings, social media, school buses, public transportation, school common areas, park and recreation centres, and private residences.

Police were involved in 21.1% of the suspensions or expulsions in the 2023-24 school year (Figure 2).

Figure 1: 2023-24 Suspensions/Expulsions by Incident Location

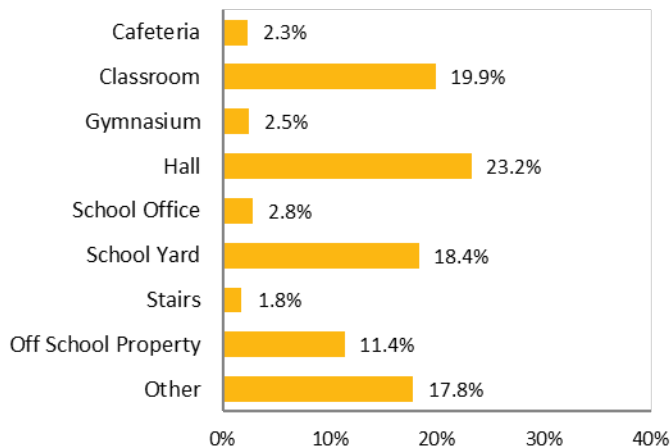
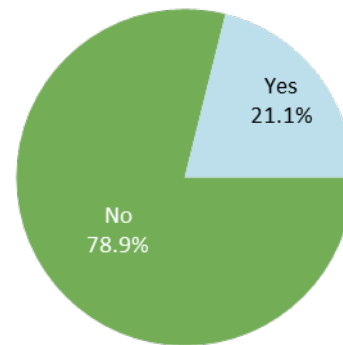


Figure 2: 2023-24 Suspensions/Expulsions with Police Involvement



Among the students suspended in the 2023-24 school year, over three quarters (76.0%) had one suspension only, 15.2% had two suspensions, and 8.8% had three or more suspensions during the school year (Figure 3). One-day suspensions accounted for 39.9% of the total suspensions in the 2023-24 school year. Two-day and three-day suspensions accounted for 22.8% and 15.3% respectively (Figure 4).

Figure 3: % of Students with One or More Suspensions in 2023-24

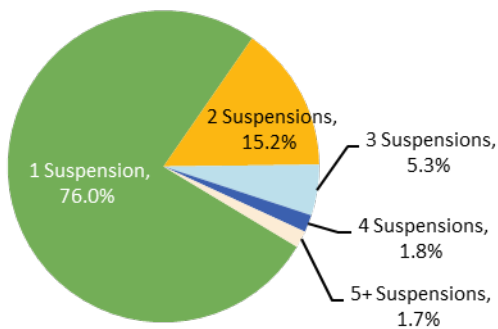
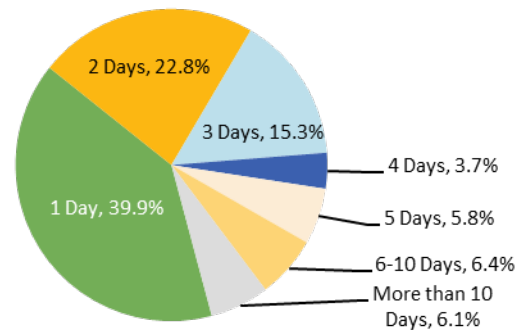


Figure 4: 2023-24 Suspensions by Length in Days



Tables 4 and 5 show the infraction types of the 2023-24 suspensions and expulsions, as defined by the Education Act. Fighting (17.9%), aid/incite harmful behavior (14.3%), and physical assault (14.2%) were the top three reasons for suspensions in the 2023-24 school year.

Table 4: 2023-24 Suspensions by Infraction Type

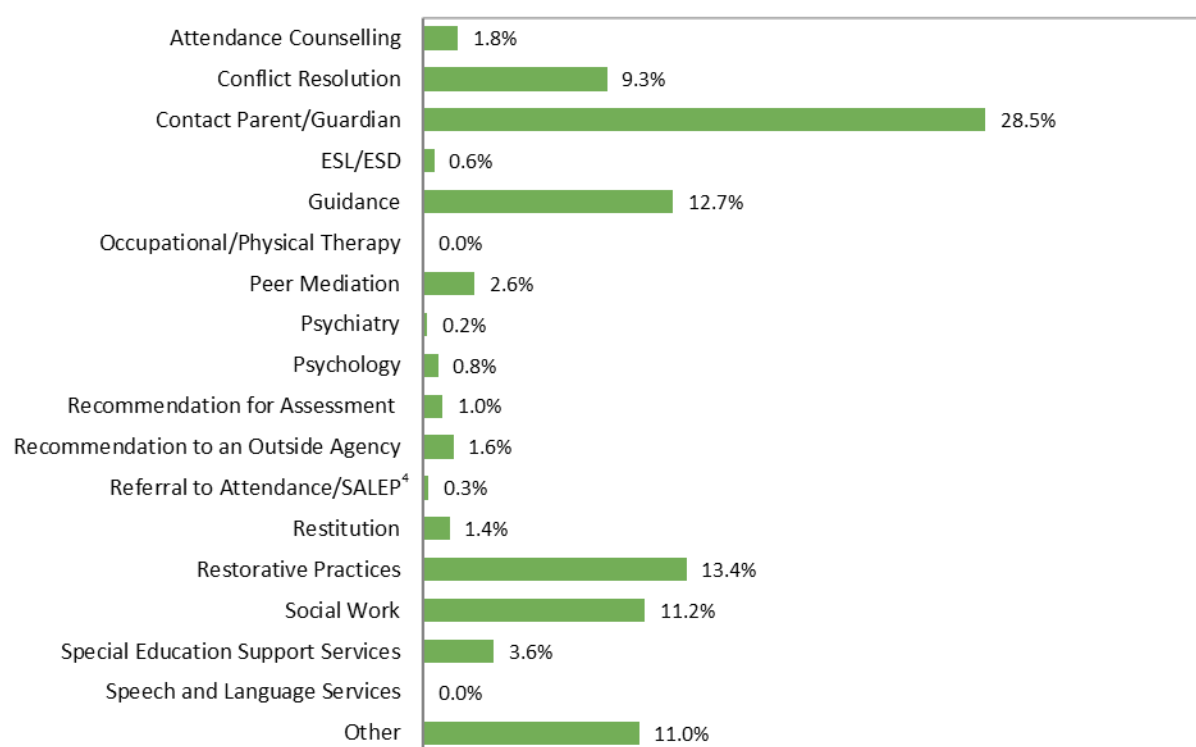
Types Defined by Section 306. (1) of the Education Act	Count	Percent
Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person	162	3.0%
Possessing alcohol, illegal drugs or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis	97	1.8%
Being under the influence of alcohol or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis	49	0.9%
Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority	271	5.0%
Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school	32	0.6%
Bullying	227	4.2%
Types Defined by the Board According to Section 306. (1) 7. of the Education Act		
Willful destruction of school property; vandalism causing damage to school or Board property or property located on school or Board premises	118	2.2%
Use of profane or improper language	322	5.9%
Use of tobacco	85	1.6%
Theft	96	1.8%
Aid or incite harmful behaviour	780	14.3%
Physical assault	771	14.2%
Being under the influence of illegal drugs	15	0.3%
Fighting	973	17.9%
Possession or misuse of any harmful substances	122	2.2%
Extortion	5	0.1%
Inappropriate use of electronic communications or media devices	194	3.6%
An act considered by the school principal to be a breach of the Board's or school code of conduct	125	2.3%
Immunization	0	-
Types Defined by Section 310. (1) of the Education Act		
Possessing a weapon, including a firearm	121	2.2%
Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person	76	1.4%
Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner	263	4.8%
Committing sexual assault	89	1.6%
Trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs, or in cannabis	7	0.1%
Committing robbery	21	0.4%
Giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor	3	0.1%
Bullying if, i) the pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying and, ii) the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person	15	0.3%
Any activity listed in section 306(1) motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor	147	2.7%
Types Defined by the Board According to Section 310. (1) 8. of the Education Act		
Possession of an explosive substance	13	0.2%
Sexual harassment	72	1.3%
Hate and/or bias-motivated occurrence(s)	62	1.1%
Distribution of hate material	2	0.0%
Racial harassment	48	0.9%
An act considered by the principal to be a serious breach of the Board's or school's code of conduct	58	1.1%

Table 5: 2023-24 Expulsions³ by Infraction Type

Infraction Type	Count	Percent
Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner	10	50.0%
Committing robbery	0	-
Committing sexual assault	1	5.0%
Possessing a weapon, including a firearm	4	20.0%
Sexual harassment	0	-
Trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs	0	-
Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person	4	20.0%
An act considered by the principal to be a serious breach of the Board's or school's code of conduct	1	5.0%

C: Interventions Used by Schools in 2023-24

Of all the suspensions in the 2023-24 school year, 97.8% had been followed up with interventions by schools. Figure 5 shows the most used interventions by schools.

Figure 5: Most Used Interventions by Schools in the 2023-24 School Year

A meeting with parents or guardians was the most used intervention (28.5% of the all interventions), followed by restorative practices (13.4%), guidance (12.7%), and social work (11.2%).

D: Suspensions and Expulsions by Student Demographics

In this section, the 2018-19 and 2021-22 to 2023-24 student suspensions and expulsions were analyzed by student characteristics such as gender identity, self-identified racial background, student birthplace, parent presence at home, primary language spoken at home, estimated family income, and special education needs, as captured by the Board's School Information System, Student/Parent Census (the most recent one was conducted in the 2022-23 school year), and external data sources. As the number of expulsions is very small, they were combined with suspensions in the analyses since expelled students must be suspended first pending their expulsion outcome.

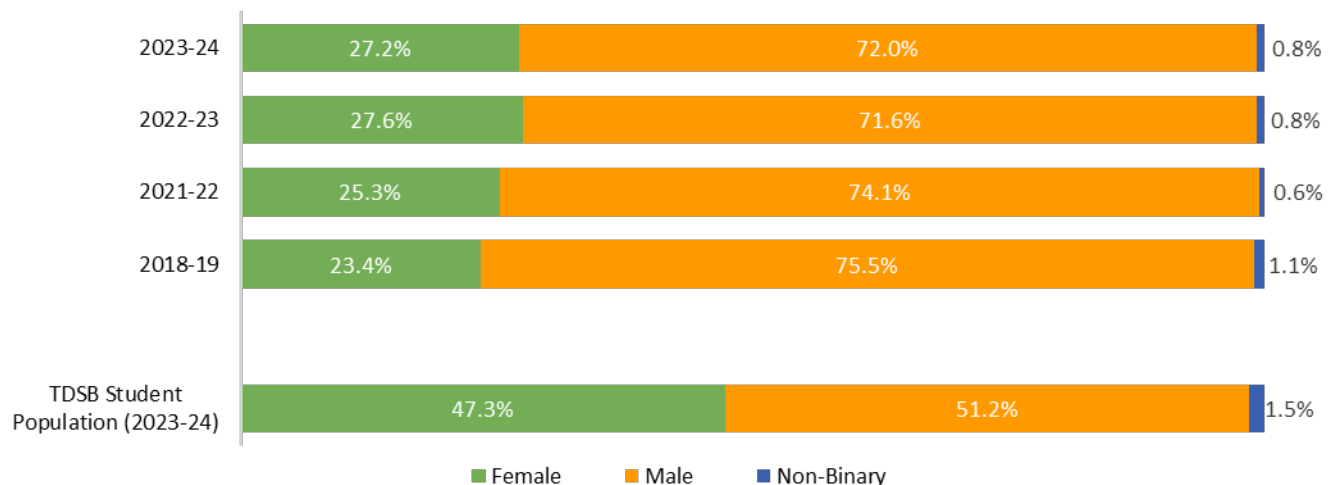
Since in-person learning was closed for extended periods in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, data from these two school years were excluded from the analyses.

When examining demographic data it is very important to take into account that student identities are often defined by more than one characteristic (e.g. religion, ethnic origin, gender, age, and disability). Intersectionality is the way in which people's lives are shaped by their multiple and overlapping identities and socioeconomic status, which together can produce unique and distinct experiences for that individual or groups of individuals.

By Student Gender Identity

According to the TDSB Census and student registration data, 1.5% of TDSB students identified their gender identity(ies) outside of the gender binary in the 2023-24 school year (Figure 6).

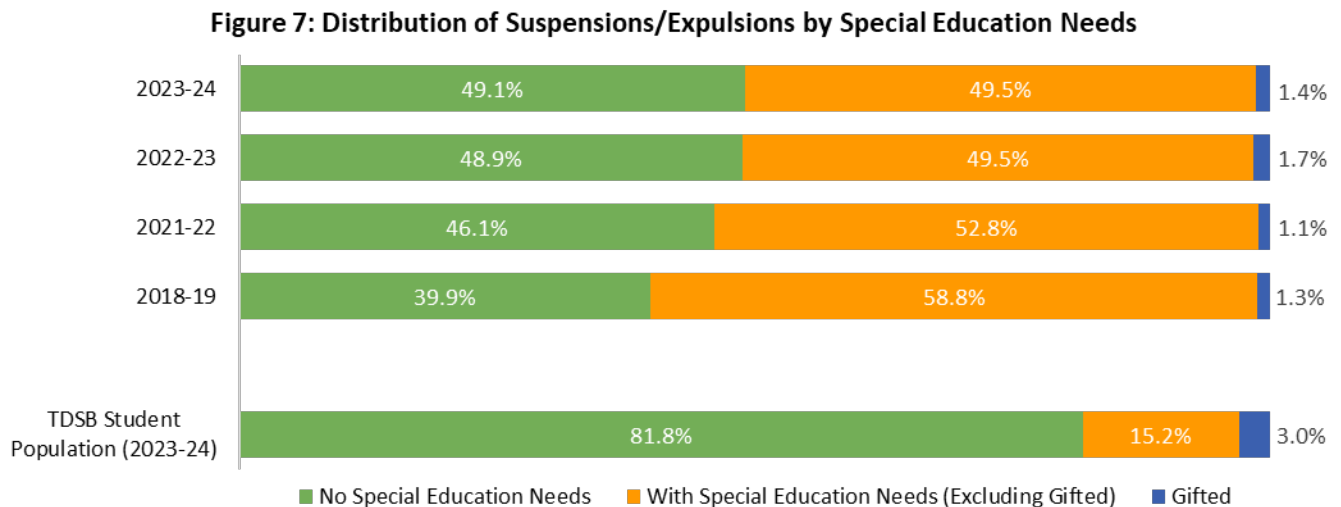
Figure 6: Distribution of Suspensions/Expulsions by Student Gender Identity



As shown in Figure 6, male students accounted for most of the suspensions/expulsions in the four school years (72.0% in 2023-24).

By Special Education Needs

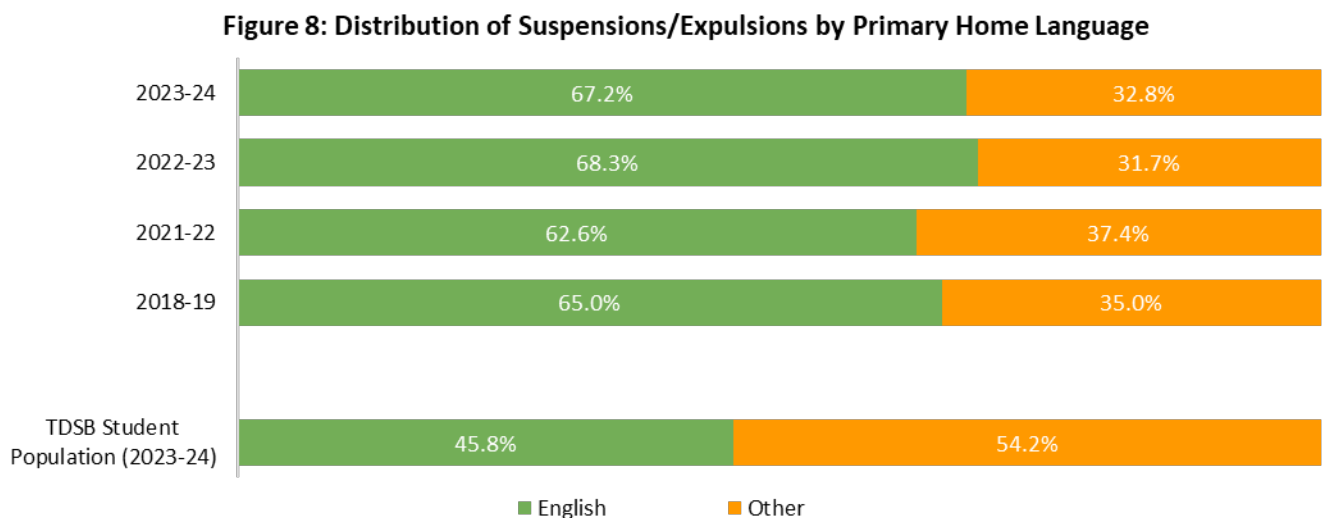
Figure 7 shows the distributions of suspensions/expulsions in the four school years by students' status of special education needs.



Students with special education needs (excluding Gifted) accounted for about half of the suspensions/expulsions in these school years (49.5% in 2023-24). Since they represented 15.2% of the TDSB student population in the 2023-24 school year, they were disproportionately high in the suspensions/expulsions.

By Primary Language at Home

Figure 8 shows the distributions of the suspensions/expulsions in the four school years by students' primary language spoken at home.

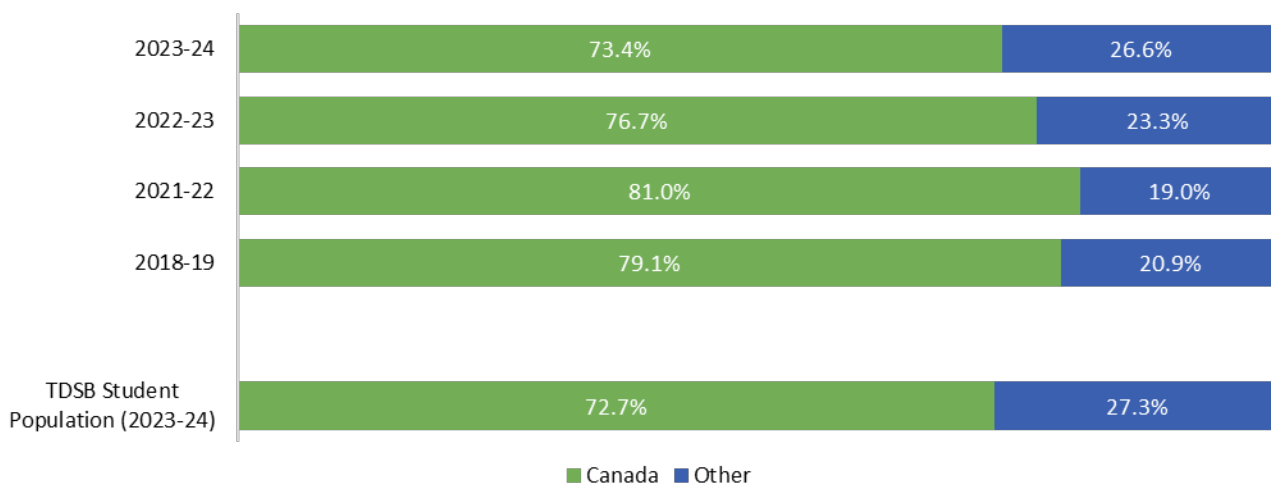


English-speaking students accounted for the majority of the suspensions/expulsions in the four school years (67.2% in 2023-24).

By Student Birthplace

Almost three quarters (72.7%) of the TDSB students were born in Canada. Figure 9 shows they also accounted for about three quarters of suspensions/expulsions (73.4% in 2023-24).

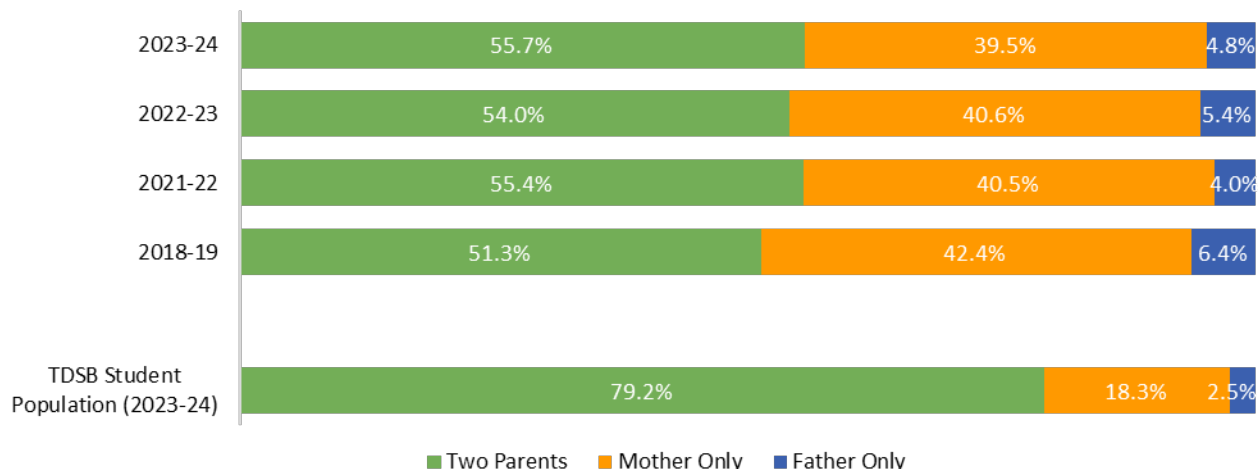
Figure 9: Distribution of Suspensions/Expulsions by Student Birth Place



By Parent Presence at Home

According to the 2023-24 student registration data, more than three quarters (79.2%) of the TDSB students lived with both parents at home. Figure 10 shows the distributions of student suspensions/expulsions in the four years by their parents' presence at home.

Figure 10: Distribution of Suspensions/Expulsions by Parent Presence at Home

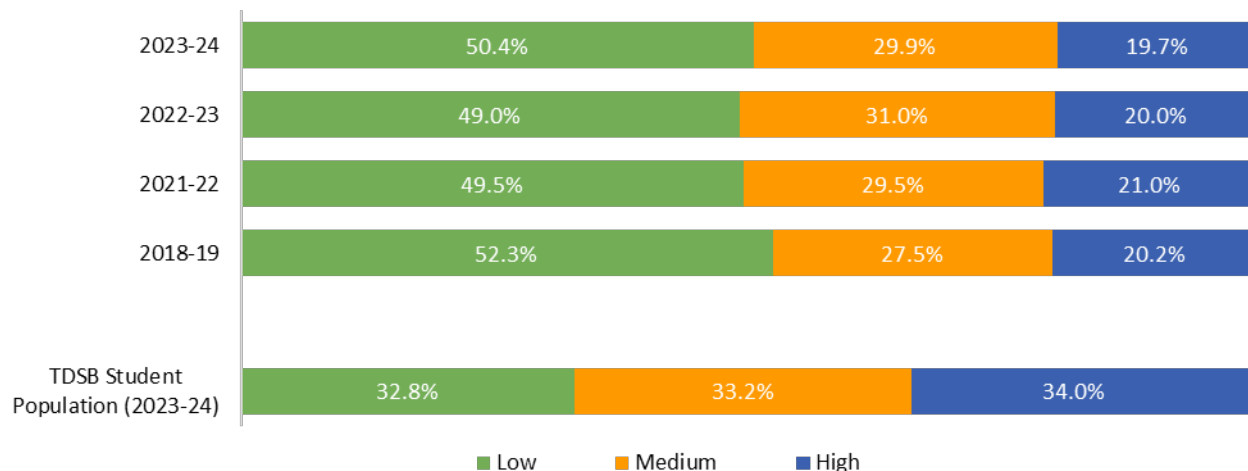


Students who lived with one parent, particularly with mother only, had disproportionately high representations in the suspensions/expulsions in these school years [39.5% (mother only) and 4.8% (father only) in 2023-24].

By Estimated Family Income

Almost all TDSB students' home address information could be linked to the projected median household income data from Environics at the neighborhood level, i.e., for each postal code area in Toronto. This estimated household income data was then classified into three categories, representing low, medium, and high family income levels.

Figure 11: Distribution of Suspensions/Expulsions by Estimated Family Income



As shown in Figure 11, students from low-income families were over-represented in suspensions/expulsions in all school years (50.4% in 2023-24).

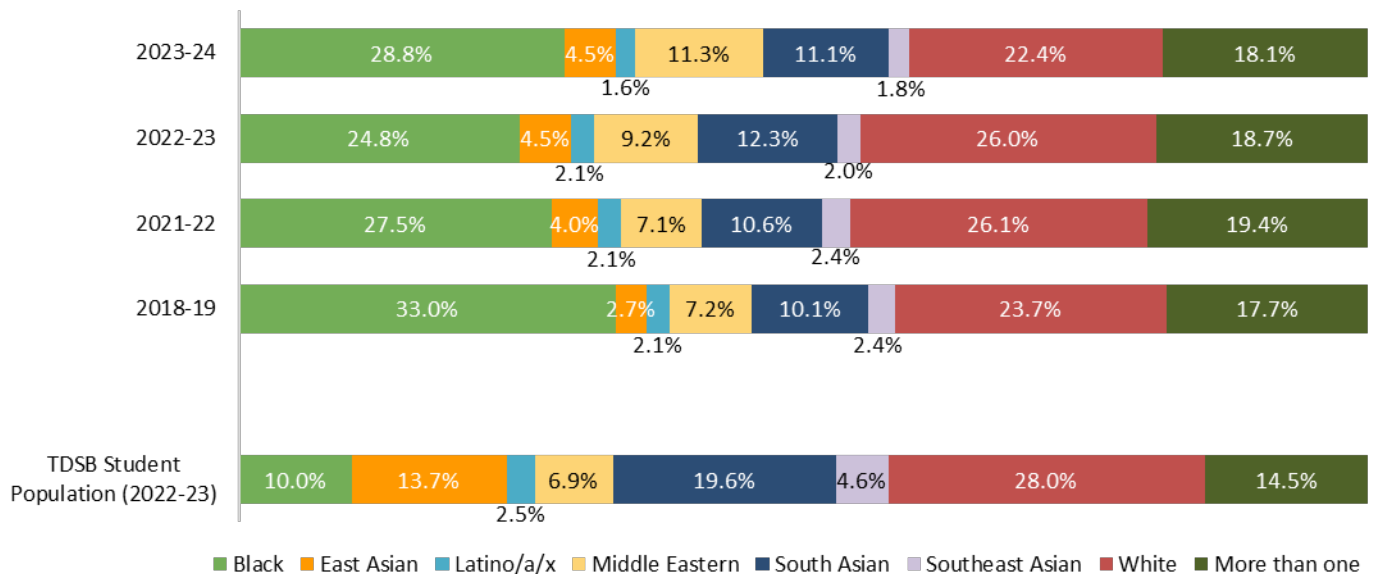
By Student Racial Background

In this analysis students' self-identified racial background was derived from participants' responses to the TDSB's Student/Parent Census (the most recent one was conducted in the 2022-23 school year). Not all students/parents participated in the Census. As a result, over half (57%) of the suspensions/expulsions in the four school years (2018-19 and 2021-22 to 2023-24) could be linked to the Census data.

As shown in Figure 12, self-identified Black (28.8%), Middle Eastern (11.3%), and Mixed (18.1%) students were disproportionately high in the 2023-24 suspensions/expulsions, while East Asian (4.5%), Latino/Latina/Latinx (1.6%), South Asian (11.1%), Southeast Asian (1.8%), and White (22.4%) students were under-represented to various degrees.

To protect the privacy of self-identified Indigenous students, who accounted for fewer than 10 suspensions in the 2023-24 school year, this analysis excluded the Indigenous students.

Figure 12: Distribution of Suspensions/Expulsions by Student Racial Background

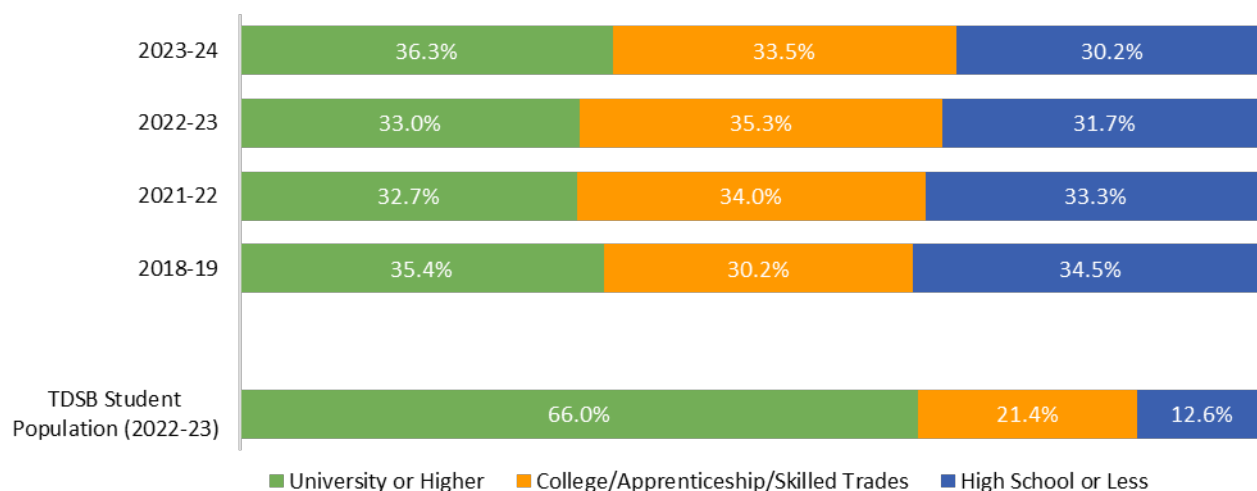


It must be acknowledged that Black students in the TDSB continued to be suspended at a rate almost three times of their representation. TDSB acknowledges that there continues to be great urgency in consciously addressing anti-Black racism and its manifestation in student discipline matters. We must build on the positive momentum of the past years to shape a system which upholds the Board's commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, human rights and equity which contribute to welcoming and inclusive school climates for all.

By Parent Education Level

Among students who responded to the 2022-23 Census questions about their parent(s)' education level, close to two thirds (66.0%) indicated that their parent(s) had a university degree or above (if a student lived with both parents, the higher parent education level was used), 21.4% indicated that their parent(s) had a college or equivalent degree, while 12.6% said their parent(s) had a secondary school degree or less. Close to half of the suspensions/expulsions in the four school years (2018-19 and 2021-22 to 2023-24) could be linked to this Census data.

Figure 13: Distribution of Suspensions/Expulsions by Parent Education Level



As shown in Figure 13, students whose parents had a low education level (secondary school or less) were over-represented in suspensions/expulsions in these school years (30.2% in 2023-24).

E: 2023-24 Suspensions/Expulsions and Academic Achievement

Research from previous school years indicates that there are strong correlations between student suspensions and their academic achievement. Suspended students had lower levels of achievement on provincial standard assessments, report cards, and credit accumulation, than students not being suspended. They also had a much lower graduation rate than students without any suspension during their school years. While the overall TDSB five-year cohort graduation rates were over 80% in the school years from 2006-07 to 2016-17, only half (50%) of the suspended students in these school years graduated with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Therefore, it is clear that a careful, reflective, and collaborative approach to suspensions is necessary to the success of all students.

Similar trends were observed in the 2023-24 school year on the provincial Grade 6 Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Assessments of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics, Grade 7-8 provincial report cards, Grade 9 EQAO Assessment of Mathematics, the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), and the Grade 9-12 credit accumulation.

For Grade 6 students with no suspension, 78%, 78% and 51% achieved at or above the provincial standard (Level 3) in the 2023-24 EQAO assessments of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. The percentages of students achieving at or above the provincial standard was 49%, 48% and 23% for students with one suspension, and 34%, 30%, and 13% for students with two or more suspensions, respectively (Figure 14).

Similar patterns were observed for students in Grades 7-8 based on their achievement on provincial report cards (Figure 15).

Figure 14: % of Gr. 6 Students Achieving Levels 3 & 4 on the 2023-24 EQAO Assessments by Number of Suspensions

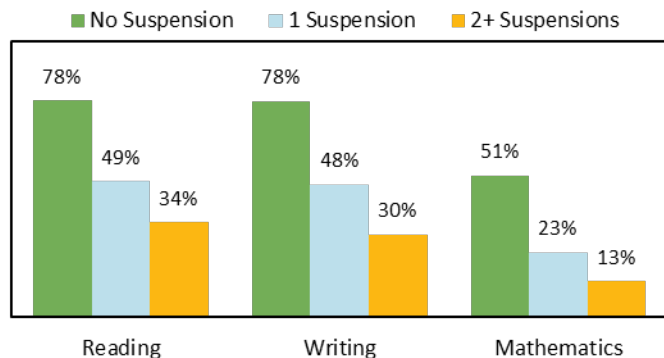


Figure 15: % of Gr. 7-8 Students Meeting Expectations on the 2023-24 Report Cards by Number of Suspensions

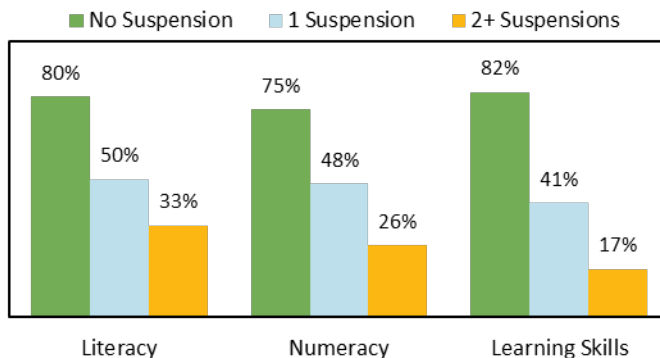


Figure 16: % of Gr. 9-10 Students Meeting Expectations on the 2022-23 EQAO Assessments by Number of Suspensions

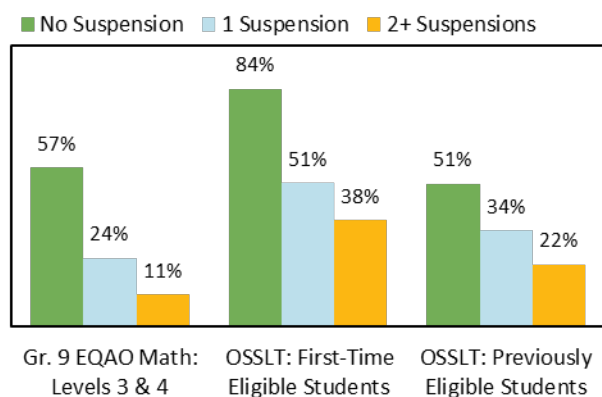


Figure 17: % of Gr. 9-12 Students Meeting Expectations on the 2022-23 Credit Accumulation by Number of Suspensions

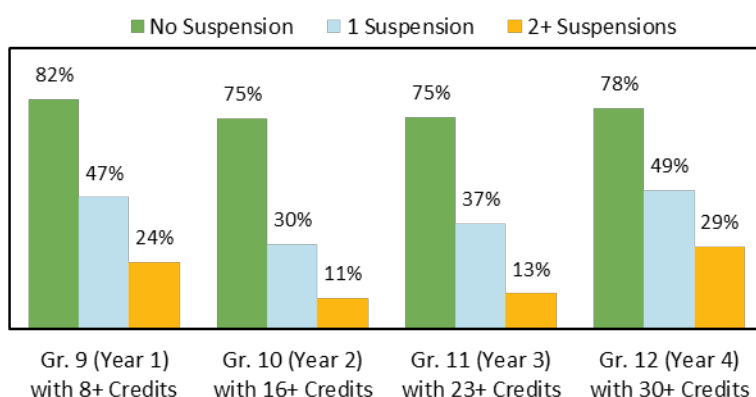


Figure 16 shows that for secondary school students who participated in the 2023-24 Grade 9 EQAO Mathematics Assessment and had no suspension, 57% achieved at or above the provincial standard (Level 3). This is much higher than for students with one suspension (24%), or for students with two or more suspensions (11%).

For secondary school students who participated in the 2023-24 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) for the first time and had no suspension, 84% were successful. This is much higher than for students with one suspension (51%), or for students with two or more suspensions (38%). Similar patterns were observed for previously eligible students. See Figure 16.

Patterns in the credit accumulation for students with or without suspensions were very similar in all senior grades. For example, for students in Grade 9 with no suspension, 82% accumulated eight or more credits. The proportion of students meeting this expectation was 47% for students with one suspension, and 24% for students with two or more suspensions (Figure 17).

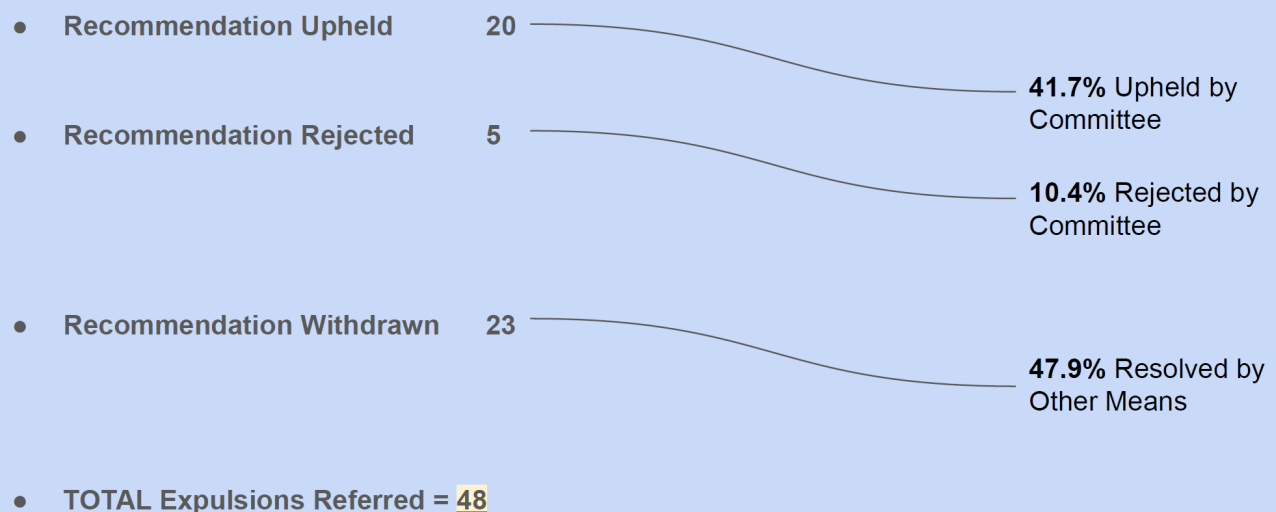
F: 2023-24 Suspension/Expulsion Appeals

Suspension Appeals Filed & Outcomes (2023/2024) School Year



Prepared by: Office of Student Discipline Committee

Expulsions Referred to Discipline Committee & Outcomes (2023/2024) School Year



Prepared by: Office of Student Discipline Committee

G: 2023-24 Caring and Safe Schools Alternative Programs

Caring and Safe Schools Alternative Programs are dedicated to fostering nurturing, respectful, and inclusive learning environments where every student is supported in achieving success and realizing their full potential. These programs promote peaceful conflict resolution, academic excellence, and a strong sense of belonging. Students are encouraged to uphold human rights, social justice, and the values essential to becoming responsible, engaged members of society.

The Caring and Safe Schools team—including administrators, advisors, child and youth counsellors, and court liaison workers—provides ongoing support and guidance to school leaders, staff, families, students, and community members through:

- Strong school leadership and consistent implementation of discipline policies and procedures;
- School-wide programs and teaching strategies that emphasize inclusive participation;
- Ongoing development of prevention-based knowledge and skills;
- Continued professional learning in areas such as emotional intelligence, behavior management, conflict resolution, and violence prevention;
- Use of inclusive, age-appropriate resources, activities, and programming;
- Intentional efforts to strengthen relationships and partnerships within the school community; and
- Clear processes for assessing, evaluating, and monitoring student progress, along with tailored support to meet diverse learning needs.

These programs are guided by Board policies and procedures aligned with provincial legislation and Ministry directives, ensuring they remain safe, inclusive, and supportive communities for all students.

Table 6 outlines the Caring and Safe Schools alternative programs available to suspended and expelled students during the 2023–2024 school year.

Table 6: Caring and Safe Schools Alternative Programs 2023-24

Program Site	Division	Area	Program Description
CSS Elementary Itinerant @ Vaughan Rd	Pr./Jr./Int.	LC 1-4	Elementary Itinerant Team – Program Coordinator and Child and Youth Counsellors - provide academic and non-academic support to staff and students both in home schools and Caring and Safe Schools (CSS) programs.

CSS Elementary @ Lawrence Heights MS	Pr./Jr/Int	LC1	Elementary Support Programs (Suspended/Expelled/Assessment & Support Placements) are provided for elementary school students (grade 1-8) who have been suspended, expelled, or in alternative placements, and are in need of short term support. Programs provide both academic and non-academic support. Academic support is provided by a teacher and non-academic support is provided by a Child and Youth Worker at each site.
CSS Elementary @ Scarborough Centre for Alt. Studies (Midland location)	Pr./Jr/Int	LC3	
CSS Elementary @ Scarborough Centre for Alternative Studies Pr./Jr/Int			
Barrhead Suspension/ Expulsion Program @ Barrhead Learning Centre	Int/Sr.	LC1	Secondary Suspension/Expulsion/Assessment and Support Programs are provided for secondary school students who have been suspended for more than five days or who have been expelled. Site teachers provide academic support and Child and Youth Workers provide non-academic support to students. Students who are suspended/expelled are referred through the CSS Centrally Assigned Principals in consultation with school Principals. Students who require Assessment and Support Programs in need of both academic and non-academic support are referred by CSS Centrally Assigned Principals for placement. CSS Social Workers and Psychologists provide services to the sites as required.
Bickford Suspension/ Expulsion Program @ Bickford Centre	Int/Sr.	LC4	
Midland Suspension/ Expulsion Program @ Scarborough Centre for Alternative Studies	Int/Sr.	LC3	
Pharmacy Suspension/ Expulsion Program @ Terraview Learning Centre	Int/Sr.	LC2	
Arrow Rd. Assessment and Support Programs	Int/Sr.	LC2	
Stanley Road Assessment and Support Programs	Int/Sr.	LC2	Assessment and Support Programs provide both academic and non-academic support to students. The site teacher and Educational Assistant support programming focusing on core

Operation Springboard Assessment and Support (Community Partnership)	Int/Sr.	LC3	curriculum courses (English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, and Learning Skills). Non-academic support is provided by an agency Child and Youth Worker or a TDSB Social Worker. CSS Social Workers and Psychologists provide services to the sites as required. Students are referred through CSS Centrally Assigned Principals.
Strides Assessment and Support (Community Partnership)	Int/Sr.	LC3	

H: Community Engagement

Community engagement is essential to creating positive, welcoming, caring, and safe school environments. The Caring and Safe Schools team works closely with community partners across the city to support programming during and after school, tapping into the valuable knowledge and lived experiences of local communities. These partnerships are especially important, as they provide the Board with key insights and expertise in supporting underserved populations.

The following community partners support Caring and Safe schools programming:

TAIBU Community Health, PFlag, Taking Kids out of Poverty, Motion Ball Sports Association, Lay up, Go Green, The Flight Unit, Peacebuilders International (Canada), Agincourt Community Services Association, Argonauts GP Inc., Brave Education Inc, CAFCAN, John Howard Society of Toronto, Neighbourhood Group Community Services, PEACE BY PEACE, Think Don't Shoot Inc. and Victim Services Toronto, Urban Rez Solutions, Strides Toronto, ACCN, CanTYD, Frontlines, Masjid El Noor, Play Forever, Ripple Effect/Midaynta, YAAACE, Toronto Youth Innovation, Toronto Business Development Centre, Karma Sonam Dargye Ling Tibetan Heritage and Language Camp, Fifty for Free, Arts Intersections Agincourt and Planned Parenthood.

Bring The Beat Back, Guelph-Humber Justice Studies Field Placements, Math Thru Music & Go, Create It Programs, Guelph-Humber Justice Studies Field Placements, The BE AN ALL-STAR School Assembly, Find Your Magic, H.I.P.P (Helping Individuals Plan Positively) & CYP (Crossroads Youth Program), Anti-Bullying Magic Show , Creating Communities We Want T.E.A.R. in a Digital World, Restorative Schools, The PLUG Project, Huddle Up Bullying Prevention Program, BRAVE, RACKS and The Community Healing Project, Life Skills and Community Engagement, Game Changers - Restorative Justice Conflict Mediation, Positive Experiences for Re-engaging in Academic and Life Skills (PERALS), Positive Experiences for Re-engaging in Academic and Life Skills (PERALS), Beyond The Court, Think 2wice, It Starts Within, 180 Change Street, Prep in Your Step, Prevention and Education of Human Trafficking, Respect in Action Youth Violence Prevention (ReAct), Respect in Schools Everywhere (RISE), T.E.A.R Human Trafficking, Project Reclaim, Break the Chains, Training Educators Regarding Children and Young People In/from Care, Child Victim Witness Support Program, PEP Talk (Prevention Education Program), Relationship Skills Violence Prevention (RSVP), Human Trafficking: Supporting Students, Youth Homelessness Awareness and Prevention, Sex Trafficking

Prevention & Awareness, Communicating Through Puppetry to Create Safe School Communities, Promoting Equality, Healthy Masculinities, and Gender and Social Justice, One Youth at a Time: Homelessness and Breaking the Barrier, Friends and Allies Youth Leadership, Live Your Legacy, SAFETY-ED: Strengthening Youth with Confidence and Empowerment through Safety S, Self-Defence and Personal Safety Training, Présentations anti-harcèlement ou cyber-harcèlement/Anti-bullying or Cyberbullying French Tour, Internet Safety Presentation, Information Privacy and Security in Social Media Culture, TELUS Wise, Wrestle 4 Fun and Theatre Workshops and Performances for Social Change.

Over the course of the last year TDSB has faced significant challenges in supporting programming outside of regular school hours which has been delivered in partnership with community organizations, agencies and faith-based groups. This is because of a lack of available resources to do so. A tremendous need continues to exist within communities for this type of programming.

A number of the partners noted above work on a “fee for service” model for the programming offered. Other partners provide programming through funding that they have secured external to the TDSB.

Additionally, Local Safety Tables have been introduced as another vehicle towards the creation of meaningful partnerships between schools and local community agencies. These tables were established with a mandate to build a safe learning environment with the support of the students, staff and parents/guardians along with stakeholders in the community including but not limited to community agencies, faith groups, police services, recreational services, cultural groups and representatives from all forms of government.

I: Action Plan and Associated Timelines

Our ongoing focus is to ensure that all schools are safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive. Central to this goal is building strong relationships with students—understanding who they are helps us create learning environments that reflect their lived experiences and meet their individual needs. This work is grounded in our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression.

As part of removing systemic barriers, TDSB continues to inform students and families of suspensions that have been expunged as part of the revised retention schedule included in PR 697. To date, a total of 346,496 discipline records have been expunged.

Several recent developments have contributed positively to our efforts, including updates to the Caring and Safe Schools database to improve how “infraction type” is categorized, a continued focus on professional learning around the impact of identity on student discipline, the growth of community partnerships, and the expansion of programming beyond regular school hours.

To support school administrator teams of retired principals have been deployed to schools to provide administrative leadership, guidance, mentoring and coaching in support of building greater accountability and enhancing compliance in the areas of Caring and Safe Schools policy and

procedure, building positive school climate, facility infrastructure. To date, 25 schools have been engaged in this process.

Most recently as outlined in the “Action Plan” contained within the *Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety* referenced earlier in the report, TDSB has invested even further in safety by making additional investments in the areas of staffing, provision of programming, community engagement and technology (school security and infrastructure).

To support student achievement and well-being, reduce suspensions and expulsions, and address the disproportionate representation of certain groups in disciplinary actions, we will continue to:

- Continue implementing the action plan outlined in *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety* to address community and school violence;
- Partner with families and community organizations to develop tailored support strategies for students;
- Address the intersection of identity factors—such as race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, special education needs, and gender—and how they influence student discipline decisions;
- Analyze suspension and expulsion data in detail to identify trends, patterns, and opportunities for improvement;
- Support the Caring and Safe Schools team and school administrators in examining bias, power, and privilege within the student discipline process;
- Guide school administrators in applying the principles of Truth and Reconciliation, human rights, anti-racism, and anti-oppression in student discipline practices;
- Review Caring and Safe Schools practices to ensure alignment with anti-racism and anti-oppression principles;
- Provide mandatory training for staff on restorative practices, threat assessment, and emergency preparedness;
- Develop additional alternative to suspension programs;
- Collaborate with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement to challenge unconscious bias, engage in joint problem-solving, and ensure equitable treatment of Indigenous and Black students in disciplinary decisions, through partnerships between principals and superintendents;
- Consider and address the intersectionality of data in this report, ensuring that Board Special Education staff are involved in analyzing student discipline matters to identify and eliminate biases in the process;
- Continue implementing the recommendations as outlined in the report *Toronto District School Board: Safety, Financial Management and Capital - Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, 2024*

Contact Us

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Endnotes

- * In 2019-20, schools were closed to in-person learning from March 16 to the end of the school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020-21, schools were closed to in-person learning for extended periods, with one-third of students choosing virtual learning for the school year.
- 1. Reported suspensions and expulsions for a school year may include suspensions and expulsions carried over from the previous school year.
- 2. Suspension and expulsion rates for a school year may include students who came to TDSB schools after October 31st when the total enrolment number was taken and used for calculating the rates.
- 3. Including expulsions carried over from the previous year
- 4. SAL: Supervised Alternative Learning
- 5. Percentages may not add up to 100 due rounding.

A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety

Update June 2025

Context

This update is a follow up to the *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety* which was received by the Board in December 2022 and its subsequent follow ups, the latest of which was received in June 2024.

The reports and the accompanying action plan were created in response to data which showed an increase in violent incidents impacting young people within the City of Toronto. Schools are a reflection of the communities within which they exist, and as such there was also an increase in violent incidents in TDSB schools. The data taken from the Toronto Police Service (TPS) portal between 2021 and 2024, shows a significant rise in violent crime involving youth (12-17 years) specifically in the areas of assault, robbery and stabbings.

Based on Toronto Police Service and City of Toronto data, the City of Toronto experienced a 34% increase in shootings and firearm discharge events in 2024 compared to 2023. In the same time period, there were 43 deaths and 120 Injuries. In 2025 Year to Date, there have been 85 firearm related incidents. This is a 44% decrease over the same time in 2024.

A growing and concerning number of young people are involved in violence and crime. Toronto Police Service reports that:

- 166 youths have been arrested for firearms in 2024, a 33% increase since 2023
- Youth firearm arrests have increased 84% over the past two years.
- Between 2019 and 2024, youth under 25 years old represent 64% of those accused of shootings

Youth Specific Data:

2023 youth victims of assault: 2,134

2024 youth victims of assault: 2,202

%Change: + 31.9%

- 2023 youth victims of robbery: 431
2024 youth victims of robbery: 456
%Change: +5.8%

- 2023 youth arrested and charged for robbery offences: 371
2024 youth arrested and charged for robbery offences: 388
%Change: + 4.6%
- 2023 youth arrested and charged for firearm offences: 101
2024 youth arrested and charged for firearm offences: 168
%Change: + 66.3%

The increase in violent incidents in TDSB schools corresponds with Toronto Police Service data related to an increase in violent incidents impacting young people in the City of Toronto.

Based on the Ministry of Education *Policy and Program Memorandum 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education*, which comes from Part 13 of the *Education Act*, the term violent incident is defined as the occurrence of any one of the following:

1. possessing a weapon, including a firearm
2. physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention
3. sexual assault
4. robbery
5. using a weapon to cause or to threaten to cause bodily harm to another person
6. extortion
7. hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences

Violent incidents that occur on school premises during school-run programs must be reported to the Ministry of Education, whether the incident was committed by a student of the school or whether it was committed by any other person.

Using this definition, the updated number of violent incidents on TDSB school premises since 2018-19 is as follows:

School Year	Reported to Ministry of Education
2018 - 19	283
2019 - 20	222
2020 - 21	78
2021 - 22	251

2022 - 23	407
2023 - 24	410
2024 – April 2025	265

As noted in the *Annual Report 2024, Office of the Auditor General of Ontario*, between 2017/18 and 2022/23, violent incidents at TDSB increased by 67%. During the same time period, violent incidents at almost all other school boards in Ontario increased by 114%. The TDSB'S rate of violent incidents (about 17 incidents per 10,000 students) is less than the provincial average (about 22 incidents per 10,000 students). It is important to note that these data sets capture only violent incidents as defined in the Ministry of Education *Policy and Program Memorandum 120* as noted above.

Updated data sets, including those from TDSB, the City of Toronto and Toronto Police Service will continue to be utilized as a way of tracking progress and measuring success.

Action Plan Update

Significant progress has been made in several key areas outlined in the initial Action Plan, including staff recruitment, professional development, community engagement through partnerships, expanded programming, school support, and technological improvements.

The Action Plan is grounded in the Toronto District School Board's commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as human rights, equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression. It continues to evolve through feedback and insights gained during its implementation.

TDSB acknowledges the impact of systemic racism and other forms of oppression on school and community violence. Moving forward, TDSB staff will continue their anti-racism and anti-oppression training, collaborating closely with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement to address these challenges and build caring, safe, inclusive, and welcoming schools and workplaces for all.

Additional Investments

During the 2024 budget cycle Trustees approved approximately \$2.7M in investments to support work being done in the following areas related to school safety: staff to provide direct support to students in schools, resource development and training and community engagement.

As noted in previous reports the newly hired staff have fulfilled a variety of roles including Teachers, Caring and Safe School Advisors, Child and Youth Counselors, Child and Youth Workers, School Based Safety Monitors and Social Workers.

These staff members have played a vital role in preventing, de-escalating and responding to incidents of violence. Working through trauma informed and healing engaging approaches they have supported students with behaviour management, conflict resolution, and the reinforcement and maintenance of academic, communication, social and personal management skills. Additionally, in order to reduce recidivism, staff have triaged students in youth justice detention facilities, TDSB students in adult detention facilities, TDSB students that are transitioned back into community and TDSB students not engaged in education or training. These students have had access to essential services including reintegration, education, housing support, mental health and well-being services, risk mitigation, violence prevention programming and cultural consideration of care programming.

The following positions have been added to the team:

- Two Caring and Safe School Advisors
- Two Teachers
- Eleven Child Youth Counselors
- Twenty Two School Based Safety Monitors
- Twelve Social Workers
- One Child Youth Workers
- Administrator Costs for Caring and Safe Schools (CSS) School Climate Review Team

Additionally,

- A TDSB Centrally Assigned Principal (CAP) has been hired through funding provided by the City of Toronto-SafeTO initiative as part of an integrated multi-sector structure intended to address safety and wellness across the City of Toronto. This funding is set to expire at the end of August 2025. It may be extended based on current intergovernmental discussions related to community safety.

The additional staff is dedicated to transforming learning for students facing vulnerability, fostering strong relationships and partnerships within school communities

to enhance student learning and well-being, and ensuring more equitable access to services. Specifically, through innovative, community-based approaches, TDSB staff have supported justice-system-involved students, those who are victims of crimes—including violent offenses such as shootings, stabbings, and sexual assaults—students in adult and youth detention facilities, and those participating in tutoring and mentoring programs outside regular school hours. Additionally, they have provided employment and career training workshops, as well as placement opportunities.

Compulsory Learning and Compliance Training

As of this report, 3,041 school-based staff have received training related to TDSB Procedures PR695 (Threats to School Safety), PR697 (Promoting a Positive School Climate), and emergency preparedness. Training has been delivered both online and in-person since August 2024, with 69 schools receiving site-specific sessions led by Toronto Police Constable Tony Santeramo.

This learning has also been extended to the Board of Trustees. Staff at administrative sites have also had the opportunity to participate in on-line emergency preparedness training and simulation emergency drills have begun at these sites.

Threat Assessment training (Level 1 and Level 2) will continue to be provided to TDSB staff in the upcoming school year.

Restorative Practice and Restorative Justice

Efforts are ongoing to ensure that staff in every TDSB school are trained in Restorative Practice. This work is led by Centrally Assigned Principals from Caring and Safe Schools (CSS), Student Well-being and Innovation, and Teaching and Learning, in partnership with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre, Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement, and the TDSB RESTORES group.

Over the past school year, three training and certification sessions were offered, bringing the total number of trained staff to 3057. These sessions are tailored to meet the specific needs of various roles, including Lunchroom Supervisors, School Administrators, Teachers, Child and Youth Workers, Designated Early Childhood Educators, Special Needs Assistants, and Social Workers.

Restorative Practice Training will be offered to school administrators.

East – June 3 – David Mary and Thomson CI

West – June 4 – John Polyani CI

Additional sessions will be offered in August 2025.

Caring and Safe Schools- School Safety Reviews

The TDSB has introduced school safety reviews for all schools in the Board. The goal of this undertaking is to support schools to the greatest extent possible through a model which draws specific attention to three areas consistent with Ministry of Education (MOE) expectations in CSS: school climate, physical plant and compliance to the Board's policies and procedures.

Currently in the pilot phase, the safety review process has been completed at ten schools. A total of 25 reviews are anticipated by June 2025, with professional learning and mentorship to be developed based on review findings with at least one in each Learning Centre. The learnings from this phase will be integrated into the process to create a model which will enable schools to improve their practices while heightening system accountability.

The reviews have three specific purposes. First, they are a tool used to support compliance with Safe Schools expectations set out in the Education Act and accompanying Policy/Program Memorandums as well as compliance with all related TDSB policies and procedures.

Secondly, the Guidelines serve as a model for schools to follow when creating their school-based Caring and Safe Schools Plans as well as acting as a preparation tool for the review process itself.

Finally, the Guidelines provide an outline and explain each of the five steps in the School Safety Review process that all TDSB schools will participate in. These five steps are;

- i. Sharing of Expectations
- ii. Preparation Visit
- iii. Review Visit
- iv. Follow Up Report
- v. Post Review Follow Up

City of Toronto - SafeTO Update

The City of Toronto provided an update to the [Executive Committee of Toronto City Council May 13, 2025](#) and will present to City Council meeting scheduled for May 21 – 23, 2025. The Report includes:

- Report from the Acting Executive Director, Social Development on 2025 Update on SafeTO Implementation
<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2025/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-255024.pdf>

- Attachment 1 - SafeTO 2025 Community Report
<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2025/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-255019.pdf>
- Attachment 2 - Status of SafeTO Actions and Outcomes
<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2025/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-255025.pdf>
- Attachment 3 - SafeTO Phase 2 Priority Actions (2025 – 2027)
<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2025/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-255026.pdf>

The SafeTO update report outlines, multi-sector collaboration, the accomplishments from 2022 – 2024, the importance of sustaining the phase one priorities of reducing vulnerability and violence and identifies new priorities including work on addressing gender-based and intimate partner violence.

TDSB continues to collaborate with the City on many aspects of the implementation of SafeTO. The City has invested in a full time Centrally Assigned Principal who is embedded in the City's Violence Prevention Toronto Office (VPTO) an integrated office that consists of embedded staff from the City of Toronto, Toronto Police Service, Toronto Community Housing, Toronto District School Board, TTC and dedicated leads from several institutions including the Toronto Catholic District School Boards and funded community partners who are working collaboratively guided by a trauma informed and responsive, public health approach to violence prevention, intervention, response and recovery.

The embedded CAP works alongside City and other institutional and community partners that has resulted in unprecedented collaboration resulting in new partnership opportunities with Youth Outreach Workers, community engagement, capacity building and strengthened opportunities to prevent, intervene, respond and recover from community violence. The position is funded through the City and the Federal Building Safer Communities Fund. The City cannot continue to fund the position beyond August of 2025 and are engaging other levels of government to identify investment opportunities to sustain TDSB's involvement and expand to include representatives from the TCDSB.

Programs and Partnerships

The TDSB continues to offer programming outside of regular school hours including after school, weekends and holiday breaks that has reached and impacted thousands of TDSB students and families across many locations, including schools, community centers and places of worship. The foundational principle for this work has been to enhance student joy through engagement by working in ways that value community engagement. This engagement has been most meaningful because it has activated the community-based leadership of those we intend to serve. Providing recreational

programming, tutoring and mentorship and actively involving community members in program design and implementation has led to initiatives that are culturally relevant, responsive and have a dedicated commitment to sharing best practices which meet the unique needs of the participants.

Through collaboration with grassroots community organizations, agencies, and faith groups, a network of support has been cultivated aimed at fostering the growth and development of students in literacy, numeracy and foundational learning skills through innovative, teaching and learning practices. Through employment training and certification workshops, participants have been offered avenues to explore their interests, develop essential skills, and pursue newly found aspirations. This wide-reaching initiative has also helped young people to access employment opportunities while providing nutritious meals in ways that address food security.

Feedback collected from student participants for reporting purposes has shown the following:

- 99% of student participants reported enjoying programming.
- 99% of students, caregivers, parents, guardians, reported satisfaction with the program staff supporting their children.
- 98% of students showed an improvement in their engagement, confidence and/or attitude as a result of programming.

These opportunities have been possible because of the intentional collaboration of many Board departments.

Unfortunately, the size and scope of programming options has been greatly diminished because of lack of available funding. Continuation of this essential programming which has serviced thousands of TDSB students and families will not be possible without a renewal of the financial commitment from the Ministry of Education. The Board has no other funding source to support this work. Staff continues to explore opportunities for additional investments through corporate and other partners such as the one with Agnico Eagle Mines which has contributed close to \$1 million towards these programs.

Expert Panel

The Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and well-being with representation from across different sectors was created to put forward a list of recommendations that affirm the commitment of TDSB and community partners to address school and community safety and student well-being. The group took an integrated and data driven approach

which intends to be responsive to the needs of students and communities. The recommendations of the group were as follows:

Areas of Focus	Recommendation
<u>Expanding Caring Adults</u>	<p>Requirement for each school across the Board to have a publicly posted logic model of Caring and Safe School Committee activities to ensure engagement, transparency, and accountability. This should include an annual completion of a reporting tool to list all members of the Safe and Caring Schools Team including parents and students. All of this should be a mandatory addendum to be submitted as part of School Improvement Plans for Superintendent review.</p> <p>Ensure each and every school across the Board has a staff lead who holds responsibility for wellness and safety. Time to be devoted in each staff meeting for the lead to review resources and share updates.</p>
<u>Student Voice and Programming</u>	<p>Pilot an east and west side of the TDSB advisory circle composed of students that have been impacted and involved in incidents of school and/or community violence. These two circles should be connected to a TDSB Local Safety Table. A critical path should be developed by TDSB central staff that outlines how these sorts of circles can expand across TDSB Local Safety Tables upon completion of the pilot.</p> <p>On April 29, 2025, a TDSB Advisory Circle with East and West region students was convened to engage in dialogue regarding students who were impacted by or were involved in school-based incidents. The findings will be presented at the next Safety Table meetings to inform planning of the East, Central and West tables in June.</p>
<u>Investing in Security Infrastructure</u>	<p>Send a letter to the Minister of Education requesting a province-wide audit on minimum safety standards for schools across the province.</p> <p>A letter was submitted for review. Staff are recommending that the letter be sent from the TDSB Chair of the Board to the Minister of Education.</p>
<u>Supporting Positive Conflict Resolution</u>	<p>Expand the CAMH led Coping Power program into an east and west school pilot site.</p> <p>The TDSB engaged in discussions to expand the CAMH-led Coping Power program into pilot sites in the East and West regions. A proposal was brought to Executive Council for approval. While the pilot proposal was approved by the TDSB, it was unable to proceed due to a loss of philanthropist funding.</p> <p>Continued focus on “upstream” interventions, and further explore</p>

	<p>opportunities for alignment and cohesion amongst inter-institutional practices. An example of this would be working with community partners to create a greater uptake of Restorative Practices from JK-12 across the TDSB to maintain the commitment made in the first Collaborative Approach to School Safety Report from Dec 2022 where Restorative Practices would be utilized across all schools in the TDSB. It is important that this training be developed with Indigenous partners from the Urban Indigenous Education Centre (UIEC), City of Toronto Indigenous Affairs Office and community agencies.</p> <p>Restorative Practice Training will be offered to school administrators. East – June 3 – David Mary and Thomson CI West – June 4 – John Polyani C.I.</p> <p>Monitoring of implementation would be part of the reporting that schools will engage in for Caring and Safe School – School Safety Reviews. Achieve a minimum of 80+% completion rate of training in nonviolent crisis intervention for SBSMs and Secondary Vice Principals by November 2025.</p>
<u>Enhancing Caring, Inclusive and Safe School Cultures</u>	<p>Continued expansion and engagement of local TDSB Community Safety Tables, with an aim to foster a deepened culture of caring, inclusivity and community safety.</p> <p>Ongoing Safety Table meetings are currently being convened in the Scarborough, Thorncliffe and Grandravine communities for the month of June to strengthen coordination and responsiveness among school staff, community agencies and institutional partners.</p> <p>A Safety Roundtable has been convened for West region schools in Wards Four and Five between the local City Councillor and school administrators for discussion about school and community safety on May 9.</p>
<u>Increasing Student and Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Partnerships</u>	<p>Create surveys to assess after-school programs and extracurricular program needs of schools within six months of adoption. This would then lead to a gap analysis conducted to better redress the under-serving of communities.</p> <p>Through a partnership between the Toronto District School Board and the City of Toronto, expand job opportunities for youth with a 15% increase of job placement including opportunities to work with the TDSB, City of Toronto and Expert Reference Panel partners within twelve months of adoption.</p>
<u>Back to School Safety</u>	<p>In collaboration with SafeTO, the TDSB is advancing a Back to School Symposium in August with a Steering Committee comprised of members of</p>

Symposium	the Caring and Safe Schools team, Mental Health and Professional Support Services and the TCDSB.
Parent and Caregiver Symposiums	<p>In collaboration with SafeTO, the TDSB is also advancing the Innovative Methods for Parents and Caregivers (IMPACT) Symposium:</p> <p>East Region: May 10 - David and Mary Thomson Collegiate West Region: May 24 - The Learning Enrichment Foundation Central Region: May 31 - Rosedale Heights School of the Arts</p>
TDSB Pilot of Four Schools	The TDSB and City of Toronto's intergovernmental collaboration to increase regular access to space, will result in a TDSB Fall pilot in four schools with community agencies and partners to provide free access to After School programs from 4pm – 6pm. The TDSB Systems Navigation team will monitor implementation, collect feedback, and assess impact on youth engagement, safety, and community partnerships.

The Expert Reference Panel has put forward a set of recommendations that will improve safety and well-being outcomes for students across the TDSB, particularly for those that have been most disproportionately impacted by violence in their school communities. It is through this sort of collaborative, multi-sector approach that optimal conditions for student safety, well-being, and learning can be created. The Panel completed its mandate by presenting its recommendations to the Board of Trustees as part of the 2022-2023 Caring and Safe Schools Annual Report.

Through the coordinated efforts of the Caring and Safe Schools team, along with the SafeTO Toronto Office to Prevent Violence, staff have already started to mobilize actions and finalizing work plans in service of the Expert Reference Panel recommendations.

Toronto Police Service

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) continues to collaborate with the Toronto Police Service to enhance school and community safety. Over the past year, the primary focus has been on strengthening the relationship between schools and local police divisions. In follow-up to the SafeTO Symposium in August 2024, which brought together school administrators and TPS Division Commanders, the City of Toronto hosted the Strengthening School Community Safety and Well-being Symposium in September 2024.

This event drew approximately 1,000 participants, including representatives from TDSB, the Toronto Catholic District School Board, TPS, the City of Toronto, as well as staff

from the Toronto Transit Commission and Toronto Community Housing Corporation. The symposium's goals were to foster interaction among school leaders and key community partners, promote networking and partnerships, and enhance school administrators' understanding of community violence trends during the summer months. It also aimed to build capacity in areas like public health, violence reduction, policing, community healing, online trends, and overall community safety.

A highlight of the day was the opportunity for school administrators to meet with local police division commanders, helping to establish stronger working relationships. Due to its success, the symposium will return at the start of the 2025-2026 school year. This initiative is fully funded by Board business partners at no cost to the Board.

Additionally, TDSB continues to benefit from the expertise and leadership of TPS in emergency preparedness related to school and community safety. Each year, TPS trains thousands of TDSB staff in this critical area, ensuring effective and efficient support at no cost to the Board. TDSB staff also have access to subsidized Threat Assessment Professional Certification Training and Active Threat Training, provided by TPS.

TDSB remains committed to working closely with TPS on any matters requiring police involvement to maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

Data and Technology

Security Camera System Upgrades:

Camera systems are one part of the larger security system infrastructure at schools and sites across the TDSB. In May 2023, the Board approved \$10.9M to replace video equipment which in many instances was outdated, no longer functioning or could not be replaced.

Installation of these camera systems was approved by the Board in May 2023 after site selection criteria were brought forward.

Installation was initially completed at two pilot schools Jarvis Collegiate Institute and Victoria Park Collegiate Institute as part of next steps. Since that time installation has also been completed at the following schools: Weston Collegiate Institute, Emery Collegiate Institute/Emery Edvance, Woburn Collegiate Institute, Birchmount Park Collegiate Institute and Western Technical and Commercial School/Ursula Franklin Academy,

Installation is moving forward at the following schools Westview Centennial Secondary School, Northview Heights Secondary School, Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute, John Polanyi Collegiate Institute, Cedarbrae Collegiate Institute, Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute, Central Technical School, Newtonbrook Secondary School, Martingrove Collegiate Institute, Etobicoke Collegiate Institute, East York Collegiate Institute, Sir Wilfrid Laurier Collegiate

Installation will continue until all middle and secondary schools have been updated.

Training will be provided to school staff to facilitate effective use of the new equipment. Additionally, PR 694, which governs the use of camera equipment in TDSB, will be updated to reflect the new systems and comply with current legislation. A key aspect of this process is involving school councils, students, parents, caregivers, and staff to guide the implementation at the local school level.

Additionally, staff have engaged an external security consultant to provide advice on enhancing multiple platforms of security infrastructure (e.g. card access, signage, communication systems) across all schools and sites.

Vape Detectors:

The Board is proceeding with a pilot process to install vape detectors in school bathrooms. Through Ministry of Education funding this pilot will begin in September 2025 with the installation of this technology in the bathrooms at four secondary schools, Victoria Park Collegiate Institute, Woburn Collegiate Institute, Etobicoke Collegiate Institute, East York Collegiate Institute.

Resource Implications

The Board has allocated \$2.7 million in the 2024-2025 school year budget to continue efforts related to school and community safety. It is essential that this funding be extended into the next school year to support the ongoing work focused on student safety, security, and well-being.

Without a renewal of the Ministry of Education (MOE) investment, key programming initiatives run in partnership with community organizations will be at risk, as the TDSB currently lacks the resources to sustain them.

At present, existing funds are being used to support all other areas of the Action Plan.

Creating safer schools is not the responsibility of any single school board—it requires a collective effort from all levels of government, local communities, and Greater Toronto

Area school boards working together. This collaboration is central to the work being done at TDSB. At TDSB, fostering positive school climates and ensuring that schools and workplaces are safe, welcoming, and inclusive is a shared responsibility, regardless of position, title, or affiliation. Achieving this goal relies on building and sustaining positive relationships with both internal and external partners, so that students and staff feel valued, heard, and supported, regardless of their identity, social location, or postal code.

While early data shows some progress, current efforts must not only be maintained but also enhanced to ensure short-term success. Additionally, continued work is needed to address the systemic issues that often serve as the root causes of community violence, which can affect schools.

Rec #	OAGO Recommendation	TDSB Response to Recommendation
1.	<p>We recommend that the Toronto District School Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · perform a root cause analysis of the data captured on violent incidence to understand what kind of violence is happening, where it is happening and why; · concentrate supports for mental health, social and emotional development, such as educational assistants, social workers and child and youth workers to the areas of greatest need; and · continue to implement the TDSB Safety Strategy Expert Panel's seven recommendations (discussed in Section 4.1.2) as well as any other actions deemed necessary from the root cause analysis of violent incidents mentioned above. 	<p>The TDSB accepts this recommendation as part of our concern for communities grappling with violent incidents as schools are similarly affected.</p> <p>The TDSB is collaborating with organizations such as the City of Toronto and Toronto Police Service to analyze trends observed in community violence data and its impact on incidents in TDSB schools and is leveraging those findings to inform the allocation of supports for mental health, social, and emotional development where appropriate.</p> <p>In addition, the TDSB is prioritizing the implementation of the Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Student Well-being's recommendations where operationally feasible and will report on progress through the Caring and Safe Schools Annual Report.</p>

2. We recommend that the TDSB:

- implement the action plan included in “A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety”;
- evaluate whether the Expert Reference Panel should be reconvened to monitor the TDSB’s progress at reducing violence in its schools as well as to identify other initiatives the TDSB should consider implementing;
- assess what additional work is required and implement it as part of Caring and Safe Schools audits to ensure schools are complying with TDSB policies and procedures; and
- develop and implement a process where findings on common areas of non-compliance from the Caring and Safe Schools audits are periodically shared with other schools.

The TDSB accepts the recommendation as an opportunity to foster safe and welcoming learning environments and will continue to implement the Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Action Plan.

Similarly, the Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Student Well-being completed its mandate by presenting its recommendations to the Board of Trustees as part of the 2022-2023 Caring and Safe Schools Annual Report. TDSB is leveraging existing structures such as the Caring and Safe Schools Annual Report presented to the Program and School Services Committee, to monitor and report on progress, as well as identify other opportunities which promote school safety.

The TDSB has expanded its Caring and Safe Schools Review (Audit) framework to support school administrators in complying with Caring and Safe Schools policies and procedures. This has included the development of accountability measures to support school administrators in fostering positive school climates, and the sharing of lessons learned to enable continuous improvement.

3.

We recommend that the TDSB:

- establish a centralized system for tracking all instances of bullying including those reported at the school level and through its Student Safety Line; create a committee to work with students, parents, guardians and caregivers to identify why incidents of bullying are being underreported to the TDSB and implement actions to address the reasons identified; and monitor incidents of bullying on a regular (such as annual) basis and identify and implement prevention and intervention initiatives to prevent bullying incidents and adjust policies and procedures as needed.

The TDSB accepts the recommendation as bullying prevention and intervention are foundational to fostering positive school climates.

The TDSB will establish a centralized system for tracking all instances of bullying, beyond existing reporting requirements, should the Ministry of Education provide revised direction and implementation supports (e.g., funding). In recognition that bullying may be underreported, the TDSB will work with students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and staff, alongside each school's Caring and Safe Schools Team, to explore further opportunities to promote bullying prevention and intervention at the school level, including the use of technology as appropriate.

The TDSB will continue monitor and report serious incidents of bullying through the Caring and Safe Schools Annual Report, and will leverage trends observed in the Student Census and School Climate Survey to inform the development and implementation of system-wide bullying prevention and intervention initiatives.