INTERNATIONALIZATION
and Global Education

Strategic Plan – An Overview
Years of Action 2013 - 2017, Toronto District School Board
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Cultivating an understanding of our place in the world, and learning about other languages and cultures, is essential to the success of our students today and throughout their lives. At the TDSB, internationalization and global education are priorities.

What is Internationalization and Global Education?

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has explored internationalization in the education sector:

“In today’s age of global knowledge and technology, an interconnected network and global awareness are increasingly viewed as major and sought-after assets. With the current labour market requiring graduates to have international, foreign language and intercultural skills to be able to interact in a global setting, institutions are placing more importance on internationalisation” (Hénard, Diamond & Roseveare, 2012, p.7).

At the TDSB, we are taking bold actions to prepare students for an internationalized workforce and to expand their opportunities to learn languages, experience cultures and explore traditions in other countries.

The OECD calls this process of weaving intercultural and international learning into local curriculum “internationalisation at home.” It enables students to build global competencies “without ever leaving their country” (Hénard et al., 2012, p.7).

In addition, we are committed to increasing global education programs for international students, educators and visitors here in Toronto.

Why Focus on Internationalization and Global Education?

As educators, we are dedicated to supporting student success. This does not end in the classroom and it extends far beyond graduation. For the TDSB, student achievement is about providing learners with a foundation of knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their goals throughout their lives.

Developing global competencies – in our students and staff – is critical for our participation in a globalized workforce and to contribute to a healthy and diverse economy and society.
Within Canada and across the world, internationalization of the education sector is seen as a key driver for job creation and a robust economy. Here are some examples that have inspired our work:

- The Ontario Ministry of Education’s “Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2011” which outlines support for international languages programs (outside of English and French) for students from Kindergarten to Grade 8.

- The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration’s “A New Direction: Ontario’s Immigration Strategy” that highlights the importance of adult language training (in English and French), as well as employment and settlement supports.

- The Calgary Board of Education’s “International certificate: Engage with the global community – discover yourself”.

- The federal government 2014 report “Canada’s International Education Strategy: Harnessing our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity”.

- David Johnston, Governor General of Canada’s comments: “The process of uncovering, sharing and refining all kinds of knowledge across disciplinary boundaries and international borders is something I call the diplomacy of knowledge… [It’s] most potent when we cross international borders and cultivate interactions among teachers, students, researchers and others in different countries” (Government of Canada, 2014, p.15).

- The Advisory Panel on Canada’s International Education Strategy report “International Education: A Key Driver of Canada’s Future Prosperity”.

- Key research coming out of Australia, including the report “Internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) in action: A guide”.

The Government of Canada states that

“international education is at the very heart of our current and future prosperity.”
The Toronto District School Board Context

At the TDSB, we share the vision of internationalized education as a driver for prosperity and innovation in our schools, communities, and across the globe.

As Canada’s largest and one of its most diverse school boards, we serve approximately 259,000 elementary and secondary students, and 165,000 Continuing and International Education learners, each year. Our programs are offered in nearly 600 schools across Toronto.

More than 40 percent of our graduates rank as Ontario Scholars, an award given by the Ministry of Education for academic excellence, and 80 percent of our graduates go on to university or college.

Currently, we provide a host of programs that build global competencies in local learners and in the international students and visitors who join us every year.

**International Students and Partnerships**

We are thrilled to welcome 1400 international students into our schools across the city annually. We continue to work with our international partners to expand TDSB’s global reach, and build its profile as a leader in responsive, high quality, public education.

**International Languages Elementary and Secondary**

Through International Languages programs, we offer more than 30,000 students classes in 50 modern languages. Exposure to different languages and cultures supports students to succeed in our diverse communities today and to hone valuable skills for an internationalized job market.

**Adult English as a Second Language and High School**

Gaining proficiency in English is a critical skill for many newcomers to our city. Every year, nearly 20,000 adults benefit from our English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. In addition, learners gain insight into social services, settlement and employment programs. As Canada’s largest ESL provider, we also provide certified training courses for ESL instructors.

Newcomers comprise 75 percent of learners at the TDSB’s five adult high schools. Through these programs, thousands of learners find a career path, gain Canadian work experience through co-op and meet their academic goals.

Many of our adult learners have children in TDSB schools. Their participation in our programs supports a successful transition into Canadian life.
The Toronto District School Board Context

The TDSB also offers innovative, specialized programming that supports learners to develop their skills and talents in different learning environments. Here are some examples:

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Programming**

The TDSB is increasing our STEM-related programming to support greater student achievement in these subjects for all learners from Kindergarten to Grade 12. This includes expanding the reach of current programs, upgrading infrastructure, and developing pedagogy to think creatively across the disciplines of science, technology and mathematics.

**Special Education**

From our youngest students through to our adult learners, Special Education programming helps all students reach their full potential. Our schools offer a wide range of supports and services for local and international students and their families.

**Africentric Programs**

Elementary and secondary students can join our Africentric programs, which integrate the diverse perspectives, experiences, and histories of people of African descent into the provincially mandated curriculum.

**Aboriginal Education**

Our Aboriginal Education Centre provides students and their families with a variety of services and wrap-around supports, as well as infusing our curriculum with First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and histories.

**Alternative Schools**

Students learn in a variety ways and thrive in different environments. Our elementary and secondary alternative schools provide students and families with unique approaches to learning and curriculum delivery, to best fit their needs.

**Elementary Academies**

Elementary Academies are full-day schools that provide children with opportunities to pursue particular passions and develop specific skills. Our current academies include: Boys' Leadership Academy, Girls' Leadership Academy, Health & Wellness Academy, Sports & Wellness Academy and Vocal Music Academy.
Mission

We are committed to providing all of our learners and staff with opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge to be part of a globalized workforce, to engage as active citizens in the world, and to build vibrant, prosperous communities. As educators, our responsibility is to prepare today’s learners for meaningful participation in the world of tomorrow.

Vision

- A diverse offering of programs that enable TDSB students to build global competencies including language acquisition, awareness of cultural values, an understanding of interconnectedness and interdependence across national borders, international experiences and a sense of engaged citizenship.
- A robust and high quality range of global education programs for international students, educators and visitors that support their academic and career goals while providing authentic Canadian experiences.
- A culture that embraces internationalization and contributes to local, national and international innovation and prosperity.

TDSB Commitments

- Expand international languages and cross-cultural opportunities for TDSB students, their families and our staff.
- Increase the number of international students, educators and visitors at the TDSB.
- Enhance supports for international students and ensure their academic and social needs are being met in our schools and communities.
- Collaborate with existing partners and forge new relationships to be a recognized leader in global public education.
Over the coming years, we have set ambitious targets to implement the Internationalization and Global Education Strategy. Through these actions we will build global competencies in our learners, welcome more international students and visitors into our programs, and contribute to the TDSB’s balanced budget plan.

**Expand international languages and cross-cultural opportunities**

- Develop an international certificate for TDSB learners that will acknowledge global competencies and experiences
- Develop and implement curriculum that supports the global competencies named in Global Learning (see Appendix 2)
- Increase after-school opportunities to study the world’s most widely spoken languages
- Expand enrollment and sites for international languages summer programs by 20 percent
- Support strong school community hubs through local programs, including after-school, weekend and summer offerings in languages other than English and French
- Continue working with Consuls and High Commissions to support and promote international partnerships and strengthen programming
- Increase international delegation visits to our schools
- Expand current exchange experiences to include elementary students
- Support further opportunities to twin TDSB schools with international schools
- Continue to support newcomer families through international languages, adult ESL and high school programs

**Increase the number of international students in TDSB schools**

- Increase recruitment efforts of international students in emerging markets such as Africa, Brazil, Central and Southeast Asia, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, South America and Turkey
- Boost promotional activities in countries of origin of our current international students
- Investigate partnerships with targeted schools internationally to promote to and recruit international students
- Increase the number of TDSB schools that host international students
- Establish short-term ESL credit courses for international secondary students to facilitate a successful transition into high school
- Increase collaboration with e-Learning to maximize opportunities for fee-paying international students to enroll in credit courses
- Negotiate pathways for international students that include opportunities in other Canadian school boards, post-secondary and professional schools

**Continue to support international students and ensure their academic and social needs are being met**

- Develop additional reception centres to provide continued support and interventions from entry to exit
- Implement a secure one-stop online registration and payment process that values customer service
- Support schools to develop programs that address achievement of international students
- Focus intentional interventions to increase student well-being and mental health, as outlined in TDSB’s Children and Youth Mental Health and Well-Being strategy
Internationalization and Global Education Strategy 2013-17

• Improve follow-up processes with students including investigating homestay and custodian arrangements so that all students feel safe while in TDSB schools
• Provide orientation to new international students and their custodians about the TDSB school system and other essential areas such as settlement, cultural and social awareness, the roles of TDSB staff and student supports
• Track achievement and graduation outcomes of international students over the last five years to measure their academic success, identify and address gaps, and improve retention
• Continue to host focus groups to ensure international students are heard and use feedback to continually improve our programs

Pursue the emerging market of international learners aged 18+

• Develop and market programs tailored to 18+ learners such as Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), ESL classes and professionally focused ESL courses
• Offer opportunities for short-term training of international teachers in pedagogy and ESL
• Investigate opportunities to offer training for teacher candidates intending to work internationally
• Increase the number of international visits from learners, educators and international delegations
• Explore International English Language Testing System (IELTS) testing centres for our newcomer learners
Appendix 1- Supporting Documents


Appendix 1 - Supporting Documents


Global Learning Version 4
At the TDSB we have our eyes on the future, educating today for the world of tomorrow.