

# Annual Report 2023-24



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## 1. Introduction

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is committed to upholding human rights in the provision of education and employment, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Human Rights Policy (P031).

The TDSB Human Rights Office, leadership and staff endeavour to protect, promote and advance human rights. This endeavour is aligned with the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* that provides a framework for reconciliation and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action*.

### Student Demographics at the TDSB

The TDSB serves the educational needs of diverse student populations. The [Student Census of 2023](#) demonstrates that the TDSB is one of the most diverse student populations in Canada. The participation rate in the census was 58%. The identity categories are in alignment with the Ontario's Anti-Racism Data Standards.

- **36.8%** of the students identify as White.
- **7 out of 10** students identify with a racialized group, including those identifying as South Asian (21.8%), East Asian (18%), Black (13.3%), Middle Eastern (8.9%), Southeast Asian (6.9%) and Latino/a/x (4.7%)
- **1.2%** of students reported Indigenous Identity (*Students could have reported Indigenous identity in more than one question on the Census. Further analyses with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre are yet to be undertaken with respect to how to calculate the total number of students who self-identified as Indigenous on the Student Census. It is important to note, the actual number of Indigenous students in the TDSB is likely much higher than what is reported in the Census*).
- **3.4%** of students identify with gender identities outside of the gender binary
- **14.4%** of grade 7 to 12 students identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities
- **25%+** of students report that religion is not a part of their life. Students who identified with a religion or spirituality include Christian (**28.6%**), Muslim (**18.4%**), and Hindu (**10.1%**), Spiritual but not religious (**5.6%**), Jewish (**3.5%**), Buddhist (**3.4%**), Sikh (**0.9%**) and Indigenous Spirituality (**0.4%**).
- **8%** of students identify as having a disability or disabilities. **\*Note:** students' perception of disability does not necessarily correspond to Special Education data).

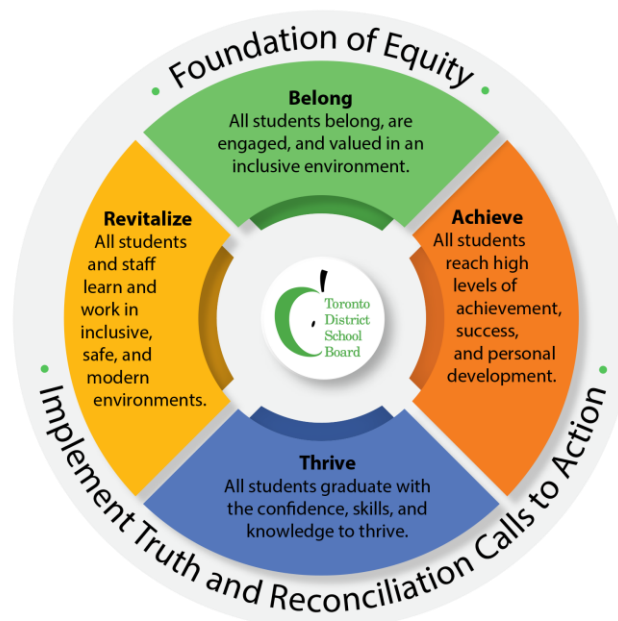
### Staff Demographics at TDSB

The diversity of the employee (staff) cohort is noted below (Staff Census, 2022) and the participation rate was 83.1%.

- **73%** of staff identified as women, **26%** identified as men, and 1.5% of staff identified with the following: agender, genderfluid, gender non-conforming, genderqueer, non-binary, questioning, trans man, trans woman, Two-Spirit, gender identity(ies) not listed, or more than one gender identity.
- **1.3%** of staff identified as First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit. (*Staff could have self-identified as Indigenous in more than one question on the Staff Census*).
- **About 55%** of staff indicated they identify as White, **13%** identified as South Asian, **11%** identified as Black, **8%** identified as East Asian, **4%** identified with more than one racial or Indigenous identity, **3%** identified as Middle Eastern or North African or West Asian, **2%** identified as Southeast Asian, **2%** identified as Latino/a/x, **1%** identified with a racial identity not listed, and **0.4%** identified as Indigenous.
- **44%** of staff identified with Christianity, **30%** as not religious, **7.4%** with Islam, **5.7%** with more than one religion/creed, **4.6%** with Hinduism, **3.9%** with Judaism, **1.6%** with Buddhism, **1.2%** with Sikhism, **1.0%** with religion/creed not listed, and **0.3%** with Indigenous spirituality.
- **Almost 88%** of staff identified as heterosexual and about **12%** identified as asexual, bisexual, fluid, gay, lesbian, pansexual, queer, questioning, Two-Spirit, sexual orientation(s) not listed, or more than one sexual orientation.
- **6.4%** of staff identified as a person with one or more disabilities.

## 2. The Human Rights Office

The work of the Human Rights Office is aligned with the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), 2024-2028.



As TDSB's center of human rights expertise, the HRO staff provide services such as:

- Advice and consultation;
- Complaints resolution; and
- Support for systemic initiatives.

The HRO works with partners to foster a culture of human rights that benefits students, staff and communities. The HRO is committed to research, data collection, analysis, reporting and evaluation of TDSB's performance in protecting and advancing human rights.

This is the report of human rights and related activities for September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024.

### 3. Human Rights Office Activities

#### 3.1 Advice and Consultation

The HRO staff advise members of the TDSB community, particularly employees with supervisory responsibilities about addressing human rights obligations (Table 1).

**Table 1: Advice and Consultations**

School Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total	613	494	661

#### 3.2 Human Rights Complaints Resolution

There were 132 human rights complaints filed during this reporting period. Complaints can involve more than one prohibited ground of discrimination identified in TDSB's Human Rights Policy, P031.

**Table 2: Complaints Filed by Prohibited Grounds**

GROUND	2021-22 COMPLAINTS NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE		2022-23 COMPLAINTS NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE		2023-24 COMPLAINTS NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE	
Race and Related Grounds	118	61%	94	78%	117	89%
Disability	31	16%	27	23%	26	20%
Age	23	12%	16	13%	19	14%
Sex	13	7%	9	8%	15	11%
Creed	38	19%	15	13%	31	23%
Gender Identity & Gender Expression	26	13%	14	12%	14	11%
Family and Marital Status	17	9%	11	9%	18	14%
Sexual Orientation	11	6%	5	4%	6	5%
Not Identified	16	8%	13	11%	14	11%
Total Number of Complaints	195		120		132	

**Note:** Percentages may not add up to 100 because some complaints identify more than one ground

## Complaints by Complainant Affiliation

The affiliation of the person filing the complaint, the complainant, is provided in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Complainant Affiliation**

Affiliation	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
CUPE	32%	33%	35%
ETFO	40%	26%	27%
OSSTF	9%	12%	17%
School Administration	10%	14%	8%
Schedule II	2%	2%	1%
Parent/Student	4%	10%	9%
Other	2%	4%	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

(ETFO – Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario, CUPE – Canadian Union of Public Employees, OSSTF – Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, and Schedule II employees)

The largest number of complaints (35%) were filed by staff who are members of CUPE. The next highest number of complaints (27%) were filed by staff who are members of ETFO (Table 3).

### 3.3 Systemic Initiatives

This section will focus on three key areas:

1. Addressing racism, bias and hate related incidents;
2. Reviewing policies, procedures, and practices; and
3. Professional development, training, and education.

#### 3.3.1. Racism, Bias and Hate (RBH) Related Data

These are the reports of racism, bias and hate incidents, as governed by the procedure for *Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in Schools* (PR728).

#### 2023-24 TDSB Data

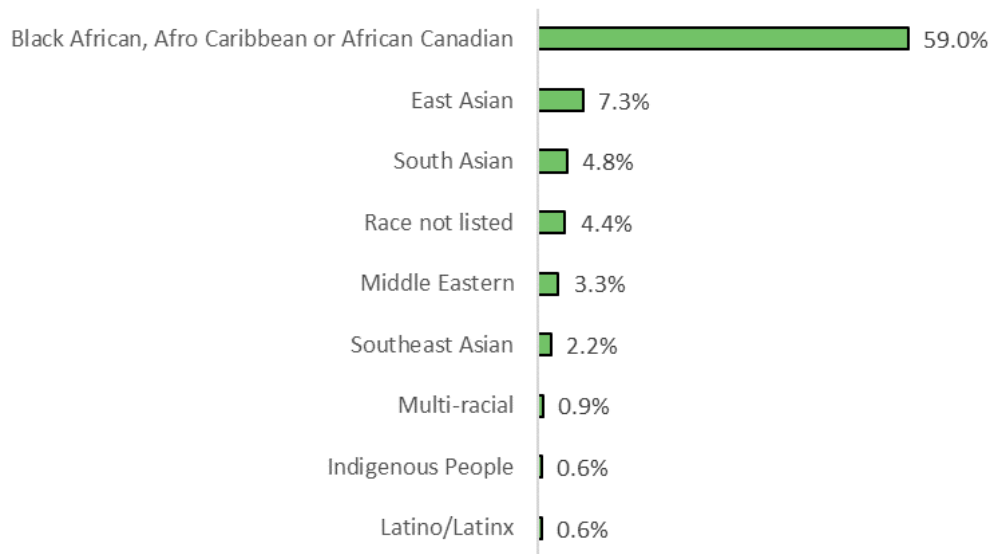
Number of Schools	582
Student Population	239,800
RBH incident reports	2,155

#### Important notes:

1. An incident may involve more than one kind of racism, bias or hate.
2. The nature of an incident may be reflected in more than one category.

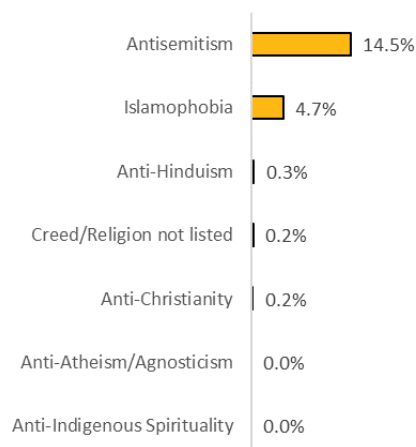
There were 2,155 reported incidents of racism, bias or hate, between September 1, 2023 and August 31, 2024. Approximately 80% of all incidents involved some type of racism.

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of all incidents (2,155) involved racism directed towards individuals of Black African, Afro Caribbean or African Canadian identities (see Graph 1). The next largest group involves incidents of racism towards East Asians (7% of all incidents). Compared to the previous year there is a decrease in proportion of incidents towards Black Africans, Afro Caribbeans or African Canadians (-2%) and East Asians (-2%), while the overall number of reported incidents has grown slightly (+127).

**Graph 1: RBH Incidents by Racial Groups**

Overall, incidents based on creed/religion accounted for approximately 20% of all reported incidents, representing an increase of about +5% compared to the previous year. Antisemitism was reported the most frequently at 14.5% followed by Islamophobia (4.7%) (see Graph 2) of all incidents.

Antisemitism experienced an increase in proportion from the previous year (+4%). Incidents involving Antisemitism were comprised mainly of slurs/comments and graffiti/displays of a hate symbol. The majority of incidents involving Islamophobia consisted of slurs/comments. Few incidents targeted other creeds/religions, which were each under 1%.

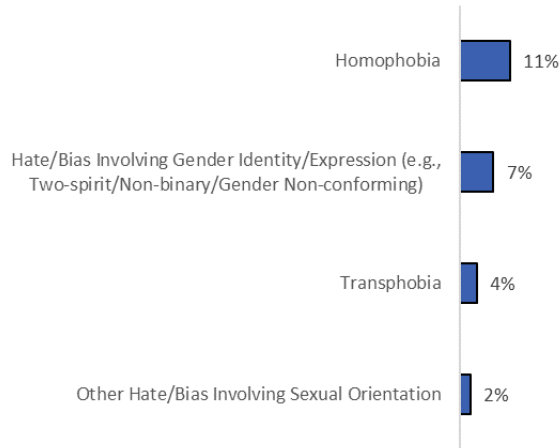
**Graph 2: RBH Incidents by Creed (Religion)**

The most reported incidents involving the 2SLGBTQIA+ community were of homophobia (11%) (see Graph 3). This represents a drop in proportion from the previous year where homophobic incidents accounted for 13% of all reported cases. Two-spirit/non-



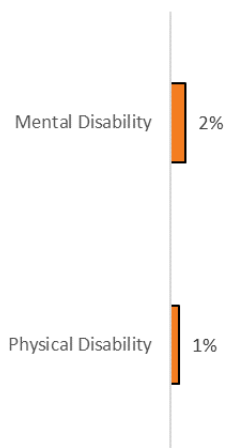
binary/gender non-conforming incidents accounted for 7% of all reported incidents, which is 2% higher than the previous year.

**Graph 3: RBH Incidents by Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression (2SLGBTQIA+ communities and identities)**



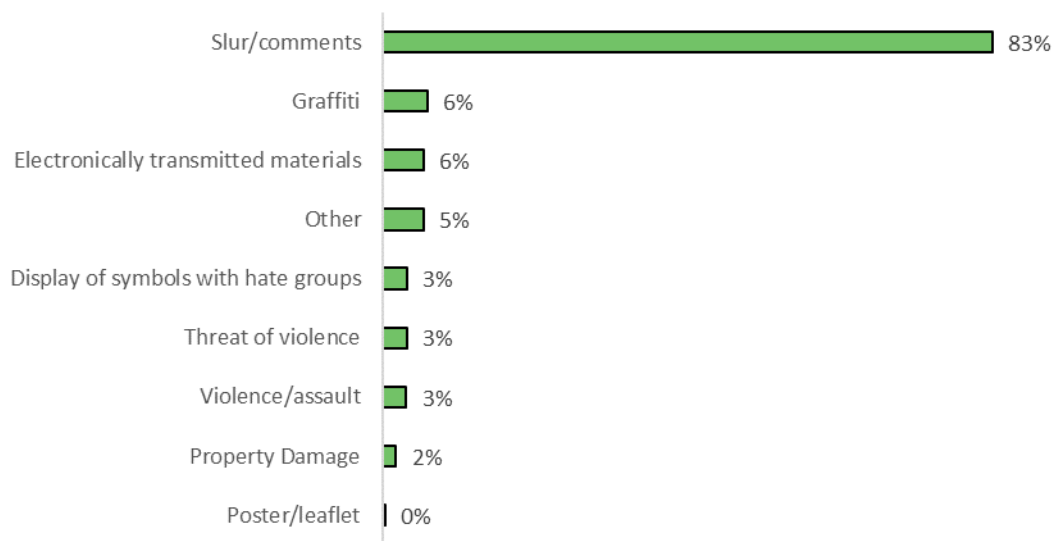
Incidents targeting mental and physical disabilities (see Graph 4) constitute a small percentage of all reported incidents (2% and 1% respectively). There was an increase in incidents directed at people with real or perceived mental disabilities.

**Graph 4: RBH Incidents by Disability**

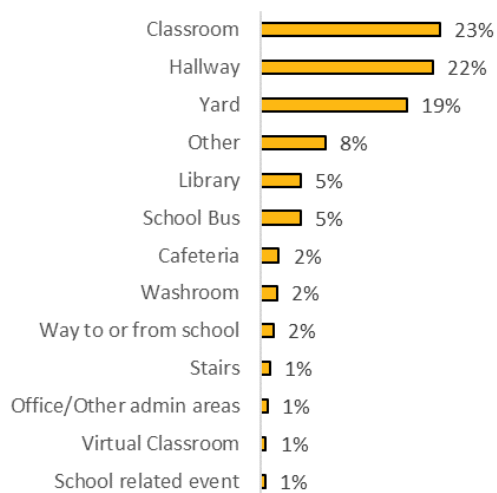


The distribution of the nature of incidents reported has mostly remained consistent year-over-year. Slurs/comments continue to be the predominantly reported type of incident (see Graph 5).

There was an increase in proportion for slur/comments of +3% in 2023-24 to 83% of all reported incidents, while violence/assault went down by -3%. Note some incidents involved more than one nature (e.g., graffiti and display of a hate symbol). Slurs and comments constituted 83% of all incidents. Overall, the vast majority of incidents materialized as incidents were slurs and/or /comments, which constituted 83% of all reported incidents.

**Graph 5: Nature of RBH Incidents**

Most reported incidents took place in the classroom, hallway, or school yard (see Graph 6). The proportion of incidents in the classroom declined -20% year-over-year, while incidents reported in the hallway increased +8% and incidents in the school yard saw a decline of -9%. 'Other' also had a decline from the previous year (-7%). There were a few incidents that were missing location information.

**Graph 6: Location of RBH Incidents**

### 3.3.2 Policies, Procedures, and Practices

To uphold human rights, governance structures and processes are reviewed with a view to integrating these obligations. The HRO supports:

- Deepening awareness about human rights and responsibilities;
- The review of Board policies, procedures, and practices to integrate human rights and responsibilities; and

- Developing capacity to implement the human rights policy and its related procedures.

Most importantly, the Workplace Harassment Prevention and Human Rights Procedure, PR515 review commenced during this reporting period. Moving forward addressing human rights will include a greater focus on working proactively to support a climate of understanding and mutual respect as well as additional support with early intervention and early resolution efforts.

### 3.3.3 Professional Development, Training and Education

The HRO develops and delivers learning and skill development sessions (Table 4 and 5) and provides resources to address human rights and related matters.

**Table 4: Professional Learning and Education**

Professional Development Data: 2023-24	
Topics	10+
People Reached	406
School Administrators/ Superintendents	53%
Senior TDSB Leaders/Executives	22%
Teachers/Students	12%
Business/Support Staff	8%
Trustees	5%

**Table 5: Topics Covered**

Course Name	Percentage of Trainings
Fulfilling Human Rights Obligations - Responsibilities of Senior Staff	25%
Ethical Leadership	17%
Understanding Human Rights	15%
Duty to Accommodate - Duties and Obligations Based on Human Rights Prohibited Grounds	10%
Understanding and Leading an Equitable and Inclusive Workplace	10%
Training on Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in Schools (newly appointed Principals and Vice-Principals)	10%
Supporting an Equitable and Inclusive Workplace Culture	7%
Duty to Accommodate - Holy Days	4%
Human Rights 101 - Envision Conference (for students)	2%

In addition, to build capacity of those with supervisory responsibilities to uphold human rights, three online courses are being created for approximately 1000 staff including senior administrators, school administrators and business managers.

## 4. Conclusion

In an increasingly globalized world with significant and complex challenges, promoting human rights is a moral, ethical and legal imperative. At TDSB we take this responsibility seriously; the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, 2024-2028 and board policies provide the vital frameworks for the provision of public education.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's endeavour as seen in their reports and statements, such as the recently released *Delayed Dreams: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario's Public Education System*; the *Right to Read: Public Inquiry into Human Rights Issues affecting Students with Disabilities*; and the *Statement on Anti-Hate*, serve as a clarion call for action by duty holders.

The TDSB is committed to advancing human rights to foster learning and working environments where students and staff can belong and thrive. This report highlights the need to continue with efforts to:

- Support a climate of understanding and mutual respect for all;
- Strengthen capacity of employees and especially those with supervisory authority, to uphold human rights;
- Increase supports to prevent and resolve human rights complaints early;
- Prevent and address incidents of racism, bias and hate;
- Sustain remediation and restoration of TDSB community members as well as the learning and working environments.

At TDSB there is a commitment to eliminating racism, hate and discrimination. Bullying, harassment, discrimination and hate, have no place in TDSB schools. Ongoing efforts are underway at schools, and through the central departments to uphold human rights and address complaints and incidents. The TDSB's Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism strategy advances a systematic and systemic approach to that end. Consultations regarding TDSB's Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism strategy are well underway.

The work led by the Urban Indigenous Education Centre, the Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression department, the Centre for Excellence in Black Student Achievement and Caring and Safe Schools as well as by school leadership, is critical in advancing human rights and equity for students and includes addressing bullying, harassment, discrimination, hate and violence. More information about their endeavours will be provided in upcoming reports.

## Websites

[Human Rights Office](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)

[Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in](#)

[Ontario's Public Education System](#)

[Right to Read: Public Inquiry into Human Rights Issues affecting Students with reading disabilities](#)

[OHRC Statement on Anti-Hate](#)

## Related Policy and Procedures

Human Rights Policy, P031

Human Rights and Code-Based Workplace Harassment Procedure, PR515

Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in School, PR728