



# Trustee Jennifer Story

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## Labour Update: Full Strike Friday, February 21, 2020

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) announced that both unions will be participating in a one-day walkout (full strike) on Friday, February 21, 2020.

As with previous strike days, the TDSB would have no other option but to close all elementary schools (JK-8) and all secondary schools (9-12) to students on Friday, February 21 as there would not be sufficient supervision to ensure their safety. Parents/guardians should make alternate arrangements for their children on this day if required.

Please visit [www.tdsb.on.ca/labour](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/labour).

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## All Out for Kids!

For those interested in showing support for striking teachers, The Ontario Parent Action Network and Ontario Families for Public Education are hosting a picket around Queen's Park tomorrow (Friday, February 21) from 11 am to 2 pm. This is a family-friendly event with kids' activities.

There is a [Facebook page](#) with more information.

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## Information About Coronavirus

World Health Organization names the new coronavirus: **Covid-19** - The CO stands for corona, the VI for virus and the D for disease.

Please check the TDSB website for information on the virus <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/Supporting-You/Health-Active-Living/Coronavirus>.

Please note the Ontario government website <https://www.ontario.ca/page/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov> will be updated daily.

The health and safety of all students, staff and school communities is our top priority. In partnership with public health officials, the Toronto District School Board is closely monitoring the current situation with regards to the novel coronavirus.

As always, it is important to remember to cough into your sleeve, wash your hands as washing your hands properly can help prevent the spread of the germs and if you feel sick, stay home and/or seek medical advice.

### Letter February 10, 2020

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/docs/Medical%20Officer%20of%20Health%20Letter%20-%20February%2010%2C%202020.pdf>

### Chair Calls on Government to Translate Coronavirus Info - Tuesday, February 11, 2020

On behalf of the Toronto District School Board, I am writing you to express our deep concerns with how your government is publicly communicating information about the coronavirus, in particular, the lack of translation.

Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in North America, made up of a large number of people and communities that represent various cultures, backgrounds, religions and languages. Here, at the TDSB, nearly one-quarter of our students were born outside of Canada and, collectively, our school communities are home to more than 120 languages.

The containment of the coronavirus continues to be a high priority for health officials and the public; however, your public communications about the virus – including your website, letters and other informational materials – have only been issued in English. This is a major concern when Toronto, and all of Ontario, is so linguistically diverse. It is important that our communities receive clear information about the virus and containment strategies, and we believe it is your government's responsibility to consider the diverse languages that make up our communities, city and province.

In saying that, we ask that you translate all public communications and information – including your website – about the coronavirus into multiple languages that represent the people and communities of Ontario.

We look forward to your response and action on this matter.

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## Mandatory e-Learning Survey

### Results of TDSB's Mandatory E-learning Survey

In November, I seconded a motion to direct the TDSB to survey our communities about mandatory e-learning, which passed unanimously. The TDSB has now completed its survey of a random sample of parents/guardians and students, and all secondary school teachers, to better understand their views and level of support for the Government of Ontario's plan for mandatory e-learning for all secondary students.



The results show that most students, parents/guardians and secondary school teachers do not support the government's plan to make e-learning a mandatory requirement for graduation, nor do they believe that it will benefit students.

I felt it was important for our communities to have a chance to voice their concerns about this policy and for the results to be made transparent to our public. The Toronto District School Board values the input of its school communities and will share this important information with the Ministry of Education.

I want to make it clear that the board is not against e-learning, but our survey found that there are significant concerns among students, parents and teachers relating to making e-learning course a mandatory requirement of graduation. Our recent survey tells us that most students, parents/guardians and secondary school teachers believe that it will not benefit students. It is possible that our school communities may believe this because the government has not provided enough information about its e-learning plans or it has been poorly communicated. We fear that the lack of information on mandatory e-learning courses could harm our students' achievement and well-being levels and, ultimately, hinder their graduation and post-secondary education plans.

Since the plan for mandatory e-learning was announced several issues continue to rise without a clear government response; these include:

- the mandatory nature of the plan, the timing and the lack of details for parents/guardians,

students and staff;

-potential risk to students who need individual and in-person time with teachers;

-the challenges for students who are not accustomed to learning in this environment; and

-issues of fairness for students who may not have access to high-speed internet service that online learning requires or live in parts of Ontario that don't have access to reliable internet

Because of these concerns, and the concerns that the TDSB has heard from our school communities through our recent survey, we ask that the Government of Ontario re-consider their plan for mandatory e-learning. The summary of results is available online at [www.tdsb.on.ca/thepulse](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/thepulse).

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## Secondary School Program Review - Clarifications

There has been much misinformation on what the TDSB's Secondary School Program Review is. The Secondary Program Review does not propose the removal of optional attendance, technical programs, gifted programs or specialty programs. Nor does it eliminate specialized programs. We have drafted a new policy for Specialized Schools and Programs which encourages the development of specialized programs at the local school level and supports the board's commitment to regional specialized programs in different areas including the Arts, Athletics, Skilled Trades and STEM. As for technical programs, we strongly support the Ministry's commitment to promoting Skilled Trades as a viable pathway for our students, and this can only be done with strong technical programs in our secondary schools.

The consultation process on the Secondary Program Review has been extensive, and is still continuing. We held four public consultation meetings and have had a survey posted online since the beginning of October. We held two public online information sessions last week. We are also conducting consultation with specific groups. These have/will include:

- Representatives from each of the TDSB's Community Advisory Committees;]
- Trustees;
- Principals and Vice Principals - Toronto School Administrators' Association (TSAA); CUPE staff and Schedule Two staff (non-unionized employees);
- Senior Team;
- Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC);
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC);
- Students from the Urban Indigenous Education Centre (UIEC);
- Student Senate;

A new survey is being drafted for students and will be distributed widely in the coming weeks. Nobody is being excluded from the consultation process and we encourage all students, parents, teachers, and administrators to participate.

At the end of February, another consultation process on a new policy for Specialized Schools and Programs will begin. Information about the process and how to participate will be on the Policy Consultation site as well as on the Secondary Program Review page of the TDSB site.

Looking forward, not all schools will be able to operate at a capacity of 1100-1200. To be more accurate, we are looking for secondary schools to operate at 90% capacity. Some schools in the city were only built for 1100 pupil spaces and it would be impossible for these schools to operate at 1200. Similarly, we have large schools that can accommodate 1800 or 2000 students. We are not looking to reduce these schools to 1100-1200. The Secondary Program Review is not about dismantling programs or schools. On the contrary, the intent is to replicate the robust, successful programs, environments and secondary schools in the TDSB so that all students in the TDSB have access to an excellent education and opportunities. Operating schools below 400 or 500 students creates challenges for course offerings and limits student options.

The final report will make recommendations without naming specific schools. The report will identify areas of the city where the consolidation of schools is recommended. Keeping 111 high schools open with over 20,000 empty pupil spaces has led to limited course availability for students in many schools. Consolidation will also allow for reinvestment into capital improvements and into support for student programming. It will strengthen programming and school environments throughout the system.

To learn more about the Secondary School Review, please read the Questions and Answers <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/High-School/Secondary-Program-Review/Questions-and-Answers>.

## Come Learn With Us!

Starting school is an exciting time for your child. Our schools provide a rich learning environment for all children to learn and grow. Registration for those born in 2016 begins in February.

In the Kindergarten program, your child will develop their skills and abilities through inquiry and intentional play-based learning that includes math, science and literacy. Teachers and early childhood educators plan learning experiences where children are actively engaged in learning and thinking creatively.

To register or for more information, please click here <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/EarlyYears/KindergartenMonth>

## 2019 - 2020 School Council Learning Opportunities

Learning opportunities have been organized for School Council 101, ByLaws and Effectiveness. Please find below the dates, times, locations and share broadly.

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/How-to-Get-Involved/School-Councils/Workshops>

# School Council



Feb 26 - Woburn CI 6:00 – 9:00 105 School  
Council Effectiveness

Mar 5 - Central Tech 6:00 – 9:00 102 School Council Effectiveness

And the presentations from PIAC's Ready. Set. Engage. Event from November 16 are now posted online. <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/How-to-Get-Involved/PIAC-2019-Event>

 **Parents  
as Partners**

**Toronto District School Board  
Parent Conference 2020**

**Saturday, March 28, 2020**

**Toronto Congress Centre,  
650 Dixon Rd, Etobicoke, Ontario**

## Parents as Partners Conference - March 28

The Parents as Partners Conference 2020 is planned by parents, for parents and we are so pleased to be able to offer a selection of sessions that cover a broad range of topics to provide parents with useful information and resources to help your child improve their achievement and well-being at school and at home.

Keynote Speaker - **Kim Katrin** is an internationally acclaimed award winning educator, writer, artist and consultant. As an educator, Kim travels around the world talking to people about justice, equity, and human rights. She has shared hundreds of unique resources and

presentations on intersectional issues such as race, ability, orientation and gender on mental wellness. Emphasizing these connections allows for an inclusive discussion and a holistic focus on mental wellness and community engagement.

Registration will open shortly.



## Summer Employment Opportunities

The Summer Employment Opportunities (SEO) program provides up to 5,000 students with the opportunity to gain valuable work experience through supervised summer employment in the Ontario Public Service.

These positions enable students to gain valuable work experience and develop skills which are transferable to the labour market. **Positions for summer 2020 were February 10, 2020 and have six different closing dates between February 28 and April 3, 2020.**

For more information, click here

<https://www.gojobs.gov.on.ca/Pages/SEP.aspx>

## Spring 2000 Learn4Life

TDSB has served adults in Toronto for more than 160 years. Today, nearly 30,000 adult learners join 1700 general interest classes to take up a hobby, learn a skill and to meet people in their communities.

Read the programs here.

Information here

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Adult-Learners/Learn4Life>



## IB Deadline Extension

Please be advised that the deadline to apply for financial assistance for the IB Program has been extended to **Friday, February 28, 2020** to ensure that all eligible families can apply. All students

whose family income is less than \$75,000 will receive some form of financial assistance for the IB program. To apply for financial assistance, please complete the [online registration form](#). Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

In addition, starting in the 2020-21 school year, all returning IB students entering Grade 11 or 12 next school year (**even those not applying for financial assistance**) must complete the [IB program registration form](#) no later than **Friday, February 28, 2020**. Please complete the [IB program registration form](#) now.

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## People for Education Newsletter

- People for Education recommends comprehensive review of education funding
  - Kids can't wait 2020: report from Children's Mental Health Ontario
  - Suspensions, absenteeism in grade 4, predictors of post-secondary access
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## TDSB ECOSchools Newsletter

- Climate Change Education
- Project Refill
- Free Cycling Ed Programs
- Environmental Ed AQ Programs

- Planet Protector Academy

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## School Year Calendar 2019-2020

The 2019-2020 school year at the TDSB begins on Tuesday, September 3, 2019 following the Labour Day long weekend. For more information about important dates and holidays for the upcoming school year, please refer to the [2019-20 School Year Calendar](#).

**The official school year calendar for the Toronto District School Board runs from September 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, inclusive.**

The last day of class for elementary students is **June 25, 2020**

The last day of class for secondary (full year) students is **June 23, 2020**

The last day of class for secondary (semestered) students is **June 23, 2020**

### PA Days & Statutory Holidays

March Break March 16 to 20, 2020

Good Friday April 10, 2020

Easter Monday April 13, 2020

Victoria Day May 18, 2020

Elementary School PA Day June 5, 2020

Secondary School PA Day (Full Year Schools only) June 24, 2020

Secondary School PA Day June 25, 2020

Board-wide PA Day June 26, 2020

### Also please note -

Passover begins sunset of Wednesday, April 8, 2020 and ends nightfall of Thursday, April 16, 2020

Ramadan 2020 will begin in the evening of Thursday, April 23, 2020 and ends in the evening of Saturday, May 23, 2020 (dates may vary)

Eid al-Fitr 2020 will begin in the evening of Saturday, May 23, 2020

### EQAO

Gr. 9 Math: 2nd Semester: June 2-15, 2020

OSSLT: March 31, 2020

Primary/Junior EQAO: May 19-June 1, 2020

Also please note [Days of Significance](#) - click for the complete list 2019-2020

You may also find this "Days of Significance [Resource Guide](#)" helpful.





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