

# Trustee Update

Jennifer Story • Ward 15: Toronto-Danforth

Toronto District School Board

416-395-8787 • [Jennifer.Story@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Story@tdsb.on.ca)



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## March 21st, 2021 was the [United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#).

The TDSB is committed to standing up against discrimination and acts of racism in all its forms. This includes anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Asian racism, antisemitism, and xenophobia, whenever and wherever they occur. Now, more than ever, we need to work together, as a staff, students and families, to build a more just and inclusive world for all of us.

This year the United Nations has chosen the theme [“Youth Standing Up Against Racism”](#) using the hashtag, [#FightRacism](#), which aims to foster a global culture of anti-discrimination and calls on each and every one of us to stand up against racial injustice. *“This year, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination highlights the important role of youth. I appeal to young people*

*everywhere to teach the world that all people are born equal.*" - UN Secretary-General António Guterres

## Recent Events in Atlanta

In the wake of the horrific shooting on Tuesday evening in Georgia, the thoughts of the students and staff of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) are with the victims, their loved ones, and Asian communities in the Atlanta area and beyond. Of the 8 people who lost their lives, 6 were Asian women. The shooting occurs at a time when acts of anti-Asian racism and violence are rising — here in Canada, in the U.S. ,and internationally. In our schools and workplaces across the city, TDSB staff work to identify, interrupt, address, and report acts of racism, discrimination, and hate. This is an important and crucial step in ensuring our schools are safe and caring spaces for everyone to learn and work. In the wake of this most recent violent attack, our resolve is strengthened to do all we can to engage students, staff and families in the vital work of building inclusive and compassionate communities. [Full Statement Here.](#)

Earlier this year the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and Toronto District School Board partnered to develop "[Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators](#)", a resource to empower educators to take action against anti-Asian racism. In addition you can listen to the most recent podcast from the TDSB Human Library on [Understanding and Addressing Anti-Asian Racism](#). Our TDSB Professional Support Services staff have assembled [tips for parents](#), which may help support conversations with children about tragic events.

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## TDSB Human Rights Report

### 2018-2020



In its [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) (MYSP), the TDSB outlined its commitment to ensure that every student receives a great education by having equitable access to programs and resources and increased opportunities to succeed. A key action item of the MYSP is to create a culture where Human Rights moves beyond conflict management and towards a greater focus on education, understanding, and system transformation. As part of its ongoing work the [Human Rights Office](#) has released its first annual [Human Rights Report 2018-2020](#). This is the first report of its kind across the Canadian education sector and is a critical resource for staff and families to understand the current environment within our Toronto schools and communities, and to understand how the TDSB is moving forward to address racism and discrimination.

The work of the TDSB Human Rights Office is supported and guided by the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#). The Human Rights Code is a provincial law that gives everybody equal rights and opportunities without discrimination in areas such as jobs, housing, and services. The Code's goal is to prevent discrimination and harassment on the basis of protected grounds and protect the rights of historically and presently marginalized groups. You can find a full list of protected grounds in the [TDSB Human Rights Policy](#).

## Policy Consultations - Human Rights

The TDSB reviews policies and procedures on a four year cycle, or sooner based on new information, best-practices, or changes to Legislation. The policy review process includes mandatory [consultation with stakeholders and the public](#). Staff are currently seeking feedback on

Human Rights Policy (P031) - Deadline April 30th

Workplace Harassment Prevention for Non-Human-Rights-Code Harassment (P034) -  
Deadline April 30th

Parent and Community Involvement Policy (P023)

Specialized Schools and Programs Policy (New Policy)

For more information, links to the proposed revisions, and contact information, please visit the [TDSB Policy Consultations](#) website



## Building an Anti-Racist School Community

Thank-you to all those who have participated in our joint WArD 15 & 16 school community workshops on equity and anti-racism. We are grateful for the proactive conversations and outreach being done by our local schools.

Please find below links to the presentations and minutes from the workshops to date:

Addressing Bias; Let's talk about Race, Racism, and Resources

- [Minutes](#)
- [Presentation Slides](#)

[School Council Effectiveness with Michelle Munroe](#)

Building an Anti-Racist School Community

- [Minutes](#)
- [Presentation Slides](#)

**Save The Date!**

Ward 15 Forum: **Student  
Mental Health and Well-**

Being.

Thursday April 8th, 2021.

Check in [here](#) for more information



**Trustee Jennifer Story**  
Ward 15, Toronto-Danforth

Ward 15 School Councils, Student Councils, Parents/Caregivers, Community Members, and School Staff, please join me at my next ward forum:

## Student Mental Health and Well-Being

Thursday, April 8, 2021 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The meeting will include a presentation on student mental health by **Shameen Sandhu, System Leader of Mental Health and Professional Support Services**, and a Q&A session. [Learn more about TDSB mental health resources](https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/Supporting-You/Mental-Health-Well-being) (https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/Supporting-You/Mental-Health-Well-being). We will be using the Zoom online video conferencing platform.

### How to Join the Ward Forum

- To receive the Zoom link and call-in number, register by April 7, 2021 using the **Registration Form** (<https://forms.gle/zTgucrjL9Jqo7PbD8>).
- Please feel free to submit questions in advance when you register.

**Opportunities for Feedback and Questions | Attend from Wherever You Are**

Sign Up for My Newsletter (<https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1787556/1752440/?v=a>)  
Visit My Website (<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward15/>)



Jennifer Story  
Trustee, Ward 15, Toronto-Danforth  
Tel: 416-395-8787 E-mail: [jennifer.story@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:jennifer.story@tdsb.on.ca)



## TDSB Mental Health & Wellbeing Toolkits

Our [TDSB Professional Support Services](#) has developed a number of resources and ways to connect with support staff, including new online versions of the

- [Student Mental Health Action Kit for Middle & High School Students](#)
- [Student Mental Health Action Kit for Parents, Caregivers, and Families](#)

**Mental Health Virtual Drop-ins** - You can connect directly with staff from TDSB Professional Support Services to explore ideas regarding your child or youth's mental health and well-being:

- [Tuesdays, 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.](#)
- [Thursdays 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.](#)

### Students - Connect with a Child and Youth Counsellor

Every Friday from 12-1pm, students can connect virtually with a Child and Youth Counsellor and have an opportunity to talk about their mental health, relationships, etc.

Sign in with your TDSB email account on Friday's from 12pm - 1pm

No registration required - Zoom meeting ID: 925 8258 8047

Password: ICYC

## New TDSB Outdoor Learning Portal



We are excited to launch a new online, outdoor learning portal for staff and families in the TDSB. This portal, driven by a motion from the Board of Trustees, brings together information, ideas and resources to help support and encourage learning in the outdoors.

Outdoor spaces, including the schoolground, can foster authentic learning and should be considered an extension of the classroom. The TDSB has a long history of supporting outdoor learning, both through its [EcoSchools program](#) and [Toronto Outdoor Education Schools \(TOES\)](#). Learn more about how you can promote outdoor learning as an educator, caregiver or member of the school community.

The website will continue to be updated with new information and resources and will continue to serve as a hub of ideas and innovation that educators use not only in the coming months, but for years ahead. Click here <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/learningoutdoors>

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## COVID Update - Asymptomatic Testing for TDSB schools

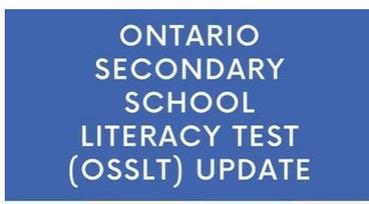
Asymptomatic testing is important - The TDSB continues to work with the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) and testing partners to offer asymptomatic testing to our school communities. Testing options include take-home tests, mobile testing sites, and on-site testing in schools. For the on-site testing in schools, there are two models:

a hub model where one school hosts schools within the same neighbourhood

an individual school testing model

If testing is happening in or for your school, your school principal will communicate this information to you. For more information, including weekly updates on schools that have been identified for asymptomatic testing, the school selection process, and parent consent, [please visit the TDSB webpage for Asymptomatic Testing](#)

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## Ontario Literacy Test (OSSLT) Update

This year, EQAO is field testing a new online OSSLT. Participation in this field test is not mandatory and the TDSB has decided not to participate. This means that eligible students will write the OSSLT during the 2021-22 school year. This decision not to participate in the field test was made with the best interests of students and families in mind and is consistent with a number of other school boards in Ontario. More [information can be found here](#).

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## TDSB Advocacy & OPSBA Advocacy Day 2021:

In addition to internal decisions about programs, policies, and funding the Board of Trustees advocates for the funding and initiatives that support student, staff, and community wellbeing and success. Recent Board decisions can be found below:

Letter: [Vaccinations for Congregated Sites and Intensive Support Programs \(ISP\) Staff](#)

- The Chair of the Board requested immediate implementation of voluntary asymptomatic testing of staff and students in congregated settings and ISP who are exempted from the closure order; and
- immediate access to vaccinations for all education workers and teachers working in congregated settings and ISP.

### **Community Use of Schools Community Advisory Committee: Focus on Youth Advocacy**

The Board decided: That the Chair send a letter to the Minister of Education:

- to advocate for funding for the Focus on Youth program and the restoration of the Priority Schools Initiative and the Community Use of Schools funding, to support free permits and positions of Community Use of Schools Coordinator, for 2021 at 2018 funding levels;
- to request that the Ministry of Education make an announcement in the spring 2021 regarding plans for funding the Focus on Youth, Priority Schools Initiative and Community Use of Schools funding;
- that the funding for the Focus on Youth, Priority Schools Initiative and Community Use of Schools be provided on an annual on-going basis and be included in the Grants for Student Needs.

### **Access to Paid Sick Days to Stop the Spread of COVID-19**

The Board decided :

- (a) That the Chair write to the provincial Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development, Minister of Health and Minister of Education to ask the Government of Ontario to:
  - i. require employers in Ontario to provide no less than five paid sick days annually to workers, after three months of employment, through amendments to the Employment Standards Act, 2000 or through a different mechanism;
  - ii. provide necessary funding, fiscal relief, and/or supports to employers so that all workers in Ontario have access to no less than ten paid sick days annually in the event of a declared infectious disease emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - iii. ensure all workers in Ontario have access to protected and paid emergency leave so that care can be provided to children, parents, or other family members who may become ill;
- (b) That, in addition to the Board's advocacy to the government of Ontario to take action on the matters above, the Director of Education work with TDSB employee groups regarding local implementation.

### **OPSBA Advocacy Day:**

The purpose of [Ontario Public School Boards' Association \(OPSBA\) Advocacy Day meetings](#) are to re-introduce OPSBA and its priorities to the government and the opposition parties. It is also an opportunity to increase and elevate the overall awareness of the association and its advocacy efforts. Following the provincial meetings, OPSBA Directors representing the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) reached out to their local government MPPs to set up a virtual meeting. The following document was developed to highlight various

issues that are impacting the Board and ways that government could help alleviate them  
OPPSBA Advocacy Day 2021: Toronto District School Board ([PDF document](#)) ([Word document](#))

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## Parent Involvement Advisory Committee - [Conversation Series](#)

**Join the Conversation!**

PIAC and the Parent & Community Engagement Office are hosting a series of webinars of interest to TDSB families. Upcoming sessions:

- **Screenagers Next Chapter** -- Uncovering Skills for Stress Resilience Screening  
Speaker: Screening followed by facilitated conversation with Director Delaney Rushton  
Thursday, March 25, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

### **Navigating Life's Highs and Lows for Teenage Girls**

Speaker: Lisa Damour, PhD

Thursday, April 8, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Updates and links to the events can be found on the [Conversation Series Website](#)

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## Earth Hour at the TDSB

Join TDSB schools and offices on **March 26, from 2 – 3 p.m.**, as we celebrate Earth Hour by turning off unnecessary lights and unplugging electronic devices. Additionally, families and community members can participate on March 27, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. For more information, [please visit the TDSB webpage](#) for Earth Hour 2021. Tweet this year's #EarthHour actions using @EcoSchoolsTDSB.

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## EnVision Conferences

Join us virtually at the 2021 EnVision  
Conference

TDSB's conference for 2SLGBTQI+  
students and their allies

Tuesday March 30th, Wednesday March  
31st, and Thursday April 1st!



The EnVision Conference is an annual gathering of 2SLGBTQI+ students and allies. This year the conference focuses on 2SLGBTQI+ Black and Indigenous Activism and Wellness.

The EnVision Conference provides middle and high-school students with the opportunity to honour and celebrate 2SLGBTQI+ communities, as well as discussing issues they face across Ontario and engage in anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia work. Students use various platforms to ask questions and explore ways to celebrate gender and sexual diversity in schools and beyond.

EnVision is most appropriate for students who are part of, or who want to start a Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA), Queer-Straight Alliance (QSA), Gender Justice Group, Equity Club or other groups of students interested in advocating for social justice and healthy relationships in schools.

The conference is free and is open to TDSB middle and high school students.

**Launch Date:** Tuesday March 30, 2021 9 am - 10:30 am (Zoom webinar), a live theatre performance

Asynchronous and Synchronous Workshops to follow - Tuesday March 30th, Wednesday March 31st, and Thursday April 1st!

**Workshops will be held Tuesday March 30th in the afternoon and on Wednesday March 31st and Thursday April 1st. Some will be synchronous (held live) and others will be asynchronous (pre-recorded) and released at certain times. Please watch for updates on this site. We also encourage everyone interested to complete this google form for [EnVision updates google form](#).**

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## TDSB Board Meeting Calendar and Links to Live Webcasts:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Leadership/Boardroom/Live-Webcast-of-Meetings>

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# School Year Calendar 2020-2021

The official school year calendar for the Toronto District School Board runs from September 1 to June 30, inclusive and has now been approved by the Ministry.

The last day of class for elementary students is June 29

Secondary Quadmester Calendar

- Quad 3: Feb 8 - April 22
- Quad 4: April 23 - June 28

[Days of Significance Calendar](#) - please check before scheduling events.

- Note: Passover 2021 will begin in the evening of Saturday, March 27 and ends in the evening of Sunday, April 4. Ramadan 2021 will begin in the evening of Monday, April 12 and ends in the evening of Wednesday, May 12.

## PA Days & Holidays Remaining

Good Friday - April 2, 2021

Easter Monday - April 5, 2021

April (formerly March) Break - April 12-16, 2021

Victoria Day - May 24, 2021

Elementary School PA Day - June 4, 2021

Secondary School PA Day - June 29, 2021



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