

# Trustee Update

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November 2021

## Letter to the Minister: Pandemic Funding Support

On Oct. 22, 2021, Chair of the Board Alexander Brown wrote to the Minister of Education to request predictable and stable pandemic funding and support for school boards, to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. The [full letter](#) is now available online.

## Update on TDSB's COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure for Employees, Trustees and Other Individuals

The TDSB continues to implement the [COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure for Staff, Trustees and Other Individuals \(PR734\)](#) to support the health and safety of staff and students in our schools and workplaces. To date, more than 88.5% of our 40,000 staff members are compliant with the procedure.

To ensure that we can continue to support service levels to staff, students and our community, the TDSB will be gradually implementing compliance measures for employees over the next three weeks, starting on Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

For more information, please read the [full update](#) that was provided to parents/guardians on Wednesday, Oct. 27.

## TDSB Reaches Tentative Local Agreement with Maintenance & Construction Skilled Trades Council

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) has reached a tentative local agreement with the Maintenance & Construction Skilled Trades Council

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permanent and temporary maintenance and construction members as well as affiliated trades unions that perform construction and maintenance projects at the TDSB. This local agreement must still be ratified by the Board of Trustees and MCSTC.

For more information, please read the [news release](#).

## **Voluntary Disclosure of Student Vaccination Status**

The TDSB continues to prioritize keeping schools safe for students and staff and to focus on limiting the number of disruptions to learning as a result of COVID-19. In the event of an interim cohort dismissal related to COVID-19, students who are fully vaccinated are allowed to continue to attend school as long as they have no symptoms. Fully vaccinated staff and students will still have to pass the COVID-19 screening tool each day, confirming they do not have symptoms.

To more effectively manage possible COVID-19 cases and outbreaks in schools, Toronto Public Health has requested that Toronto school boards begin collecting the voluntary disclosure of vaccination status by students born in 2009 and earlier. This is intended to minimize disruption to the students and support a more efficient dismissal process.

For more information, please read the [web story](#).

## **Toronto Public Health School Immunization Program**

Toronto Public Health is offering free Vaccination Clinics in Toronto for the following vaccines:

- Meningococcal-ACYW to prevent meningitis
- Human papillomavirus to prevent cancers
- Hepatitis-B to prevent liver cancer

All students in Grade 7 and higher who have not received any or all of these vaccines are eligible.

These vaccines will be available Tuesdays through Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the City's vaccination clinics located at:

- Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front St W, North Building
- Scarborough Town Centre, 300 Borough Drive
- Cloverdale Mall, 250 The East Mall
- Mitchell Field Community Centre, 89 Church Ave
- Woodbine Mall, 500 Rexdale Blvd

No walk-ins, make an appointment at [www.tphBookings.ca/tph/studentvaccines](http://www.tphBookings.ca/tph/studentvaccines)

Meningococcal vaccination is a requirement for school attendance. Your child must be up-to-date with the meningococcal vaccine or have a valid exemption to avoid school suspension.

For information about these vaccines talk to your doctor or call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.

Read the full [letter from Toronto Public Health](#) and complete the [consent form](#) to access the vaccinations.

## **Statement from TDSB Chair Alexander Brown Re: Supreme Court Ruling**

While we are disappointed with today's Supreme Court ruling on Bill 5, the fact that it was a very close decision supports our Board's position that the Province's actions were undemocratic.

Our board took great effort to consult with our communities before finalizing ward boundaries, only to have the Province change them without any opportunity for public notification and consultation. As we said at the time, this is not reflective of reasonable public expectations for consultation, transparency, accountability and the proper administration of government.

We appreciate that the Supreme Court of Canada considered the TDSB's position in support of the City of Toronto's case and the people who live here.

## **Director's Gender and Sexuality Alliance Awards Applications Now Open**

For the past ten years, the [Director's Gender Sexuality Alliance\(GSA\) Awards](#) have recognized and honoured GSAs across the Toronto District School Board, however during these last two school years (2019-20 and 2020-21) the GSA Awards were postponed due to the pandemic.

But this year, the Director's GSA Awards is back. We know GSAs have been working hard to support each other while having to pivot to remote learning. During this time, some GSAs transitioned their individual school-based groups online whilst others partnered with grassroots activists and community organizations to connect queer, trans, and non-binary students with even more support. One of the most outstanding initiatives created during the pandemic was the [TDSB's GSA Network](#), which continues to connect hundreds of staff and

students across the school board through incredible broad actions of collective care.

To honour all of this creative work by GSAs to support each other, the TDSB wants to commit to providing the necessary resources for these groups to continue and expand. Therefore, this fall/winter the Director's GSA Awards will be awarding \$1,000 to eight GSAs from across the TDSB that operated during the 2019-2020 and 2020-21 academic school year.

In Spring 2022, four more awards will be announced for GSAs operating during the 2021/22 academic school year.

The application deadline is Friday, December 3, 2021 at 4 p.m.

Please send applications to [GSAAwards@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:GSAAwards@tdsb.on.ca).

For full application details, click [here](#).

## **Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement – Community Consultations**

The Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement in collaboration with select community partner organizations are facilitating a series of community consultations. Community members and parents of students who self-identify as Black are invited to register for a virtual session. Upcoming dates are November 9, 16, 17 and November 23 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

For more details and to register, visit: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cebsa/community-engagement>

## **Grade 8 Virtual Open Houses and Information Nights**

Grade 8 students and families are invited to attend virtual open houses and information sessions (live or pre-recorded) hosted by high schools beginning in November. These sessions offer important information to help make an informed decision when choosing a high school. To learn more about important program and school information, access the pre-recorded information sessions and see the dates/times for information sessions, please visit the Virtual Open Houses and Information Sessions website at [www.tdsb.on.ca/OpenHouses](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/OpenHouses).

## **Reminder to call school if your child will be late or absent**

One measure of keeping our students safe is to ensure we can account for any

absences or reasons for being late to school. We would like to remind you that if your child is going to be absent or late for any reason, we ask that you contact the school immediately and report the reason for the absence. If we are not informed about the absence, we will make attempts to contact you through our automated call-out system to determine the reason for the absence.

To find out how this automated system works please visit

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/HighSchool/CaringSafeSchools/SafeArrivalProgram.aspx>

Please let the office know by calling the school if your contact information, including phone number, changes at any time throughout the school year.

Thank you for your continued cooperation to keep your children safe and accounted for.

## **Keeping Children Safe**

Drivers are reminded to do their part to keep children safe near school buses.

Drivers should follow these tips:

- Stop and never pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing.
- Leave space around school buses and avoid blocking school bus loading zones so children can enter and exit safely.
- Be prepared to stop for a school bus at any time, not just during school hours.
- Always obey the rules of the road and watch for children, especially in school zones.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and school crossings.

Parents can also help keep their children safe by reminding them to be aware of their surroundings when they are on or near school buses.

## **Join us for the PIAC Parent Conference!**

Save the date for November 27 and 28 for the PIAC Parent Conference. Bridging the Gap is a two day virtual event with speakers and workshops focused on bridging the gap in our schools in mental health, parent engagement and school councils. Engage with other parents and caregivers from across the TDSB as we learn and share best practices on reconnecting mentally and socially with ourselves, students, schools and communities.

More information will be available online at [www.torontopiac.com](http://www.torontopiac.com).

## **Lockdown and Fire Drills**

At the beginning of each school year, our students and staff prepare for the year ahead by establishing the foundations for a successful year. One of the ways we know we can help students be successful is to create a safe environment in which to learn. Though no one ever wants to see an emergency happen at a school, it's important for school staff to be equipped to deal with those situations, should they occur.

The safety of students and staff is a top priority at our school and to that end, as with all emergency drills, it is essential that we are prepared and understand the importance of procedures that will help ensure the safety of everyone in our school.

The TDSB has taken steps to ensure your child's safety while in school. Each school has developed emergency preparedness plans that include steps staff will take in the event of an emergency, how staff will get students away from possible dangers, and how students' families will be contacted.

One aspect of emergency preparedness is the lockdown and fire drill. All schools are required to conduct a minimum of two lockdown drills and six fire drills each school year. Lockdown drills, like fire drills, are an essential component to ensure student and staff safety. It is important that all staff and students are prepared and know how to respond in cases of emergencies. The drills last approximately 5 minutes and ensure plans are effective and can also systematically identify any safety concerns.

Communication is also very important in any emergency situation. The emergency contact information kept on file is important in helping this happen. It lists the people who can pick up a student from the school. If you have not yet provided this information to our school office or have updates to the information on file, please make sure our office staff have that information as soon as possible.

## **Heritage and History Months**

The Toronto District School Board is proud to celebrate the following heritage and history months during November:

- [Indigenous Education Month](#)
- [Hindu Heritage Month](#)

## **TDSB Update**

Sign-up for [TDSB Update](#) and stay informed about recent Board decisions and district-wide news.

## **Follow the TDSB**

Join the conversations happening on TDSB's social media communities. You'll find the most up-to-date information about us on our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts.

- [Twitter @TDSB](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram @Torontodsb](#)

## **TDSB Student and Parent Census - Spring 2022**

Student Census is coming Spring 2022!

The TDSB Student Census is a confidential and voluntary survey that asks important identity-based questions as well as questions about experiences inside and outside of school. Students in grades 4 to 12 complete the census themselves, while parents complete the census for students in kindergarten to grade 3.

Since 2006, TDSB schools have been collecting identity-based data through the Student Census to identify and remove systemic barriers which may limit student achievement and well-being. Since 2018, this work has been encouraged for all school boards in Ontario under the Provincial Anti-Racism Act. In 2023, this work will be mandated for all school boards.

By gathering this important information through our Student Census every 4 to 5 years, school communities are able to determine what is working well in our system, where change is required, and where supports should be focused. This data can be instrumental in highlighting the various forms of systemic oppression and complex issues of human rights that impact students and families in the TDSB.

To build Census 2022, the TDSB will be asking communities for input on question topics in the fall. Later on, we will be providing opportunities for communities to collaborate and participate in data analysis and interpretation.

Read more about the [Parent and Student Census](#)

## Specialized Schools and Programs Policy

Public Policy Consultation (November 1 - December 17, 2021)

We want to hear your voice to help shape this draft policy into something meaningful and relevant. Please review the [draft Specialized Schools and Programs Policy](#) and for reference, you may wish to review the current [Optional Attendance Policy](#).

Live Consultation Webinars: You're invited join our online consultations to learn more, ask questions and share your feedback. Please note that participants must pre-register for the [Live Consultation Webinars](#).

Online Survey: Share your feedback through our [online survey](#), by December 17, 2021.

## Early French Immersion Program – Application Information

For families interested in the Toronto District School Board's Early French Immersion program, we offer an online process to apply. The entry point to Early French Immersion is moving to Junior Kindergarten. **There will be one transition year wherein students who will be entering Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten in 2022 will be eligible to apply to the Early French Immersion program during the November 2021 application period. Moving forward (2023), the only entry point for Early French Immersion will be Junior Kindergarten.**

An offer of placement in the program (**not** a specific school) is guaranteed to all on-time applicants. The timelines for applying for the program for September 2022 are:

Early French Immersion: Applications must be completed online between November 1 and November 26, 2021.

Offers of placement within your chosen program (not a specific school) will be made to all on-time applicants in the weeks following the close of the application window. Families with an older sibling currently in a French program and who will be in attendance next year are still required to complete an online application for the new student. Please select the “**sibling option**” within the online application.

Virtual Information Sessions for the **Early French Immersion** application and placement process are available in November on the following dates:

- November 8, 2021 at 7 p.m.
- November 15, 2021 at 10 a.m.

November 23, 2021 at 7 p.m.

For more information about the Virtual Information Sessions, please visit [www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/School-Choices/French-Programs/Information-Sessions](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/School-Choices/French-Programs/Information-Sessions).

For more information about French programs, the application process and important dates, please visit [www.tdsb.on.ca/french](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/french) or click on [Application Process](#). For details, please see the downloadable [information package](#) or click [here](#) for Early French Immersion flyers in 22 languages.

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