

# Trustee Update

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## October Newsletter

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The start of the 2020-2021 for TDSB staff, students and parents/guardians has been characterized by uncertainty and new challenges. Staff at TDSB have been working to ensure the return to school, and it has not been perfect. With daily changes in protocols and policies released by the provincial and municipal governments, it is our priority at the TDSB to ensure in person learning adheres to public health guidelines

As the weeks continue, progress is being made to reach the goal of having all students connected to a teacher and virtual classroom. This has been a long and challenging process and we all want learning to be underway for everyone as soon as possible. Please see below for an update about Elementary Virtual School.

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### Staffing Update

#### French Immersion/Extended French Teachers

The Board continue to explore options to meet the need for FI/EF classrooms. However, as has been noted in prior updates, there is an ongoing shortage of French teachers across Ontario. All school boards are facing similar French language teacher staffing challenges. The Board is looking at options and will continue to keep families updated.

For those students applying to switch from Virtual School to In-School Learning, the ability to accommodate this request will depend on the availability of French teachers in the student's FI/EF school.

#### Independent Home Learning

Please continue to access independent learning resources on the [Asynchronous Learning web page](#). New activities and live sessions for each grade are being added daily.

#### Brightspace/Technical Support

If you are experiencing account and password issues, [please complete this form](#). Once the information has been verified, login and password information for your child will be emailed to you. Additionally, you can access [Brightspace support 24 hours a day](#).

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

## Exemptions to Synchronous (Live, Interactive) Learning

The deadline date for families to request an [exemption from synchronous \(live, interactive\) learning](#) has been extended to **Tuesday, October 20 at 4 p.m.** to accommodate the late start for some students in Elementary Virtual School.

## Revised Health Screening Guidelines

The Ministry of Education announced that it has [updated its COVID-19 school and child care screening guidance](#). The TDSB takes its lead from Toronto Public Health, who has also revised their guidance based on the provincial direction

According to the revised guidelines, students and children with symptoms such as fever and cough will still be advised to stay home until they are able to consult with a health care provider and receive an alternate diagnosis or a negative COVID-19 test. A second set of questions now deals with symptoms that are commonly associated with other illnesses, such as runny nose or headache, and provides the following direction

- Students and children with only one of these symptoms will be advised to stay home for 24 hours, after which they can return to school or childcare if their symptoms are improving
- Students and children with two or more of these symptoms will be advised to stay home until they are able to consult with a health care provider and receive an alternative diagnosis or a negative COVID-19 test.

In addition, based on the latest public health guidance, the symptom list for children in school and childcare no longer includes abdominal pain or conjunctivitis (pink eye).

Based on this update, here is the [new student screening tool](#) from Toronto Public Health, as well as the [revised TDSB's Health Pass](#). The TDSB Daily Health Screening App has also been updated to reflect these changes.

## COVID-19 Advisories

The Toronto District School Board is committed to providing up to date information about confirmed cases of COVID-19 in schools (students and staff). This information is easily accessible by clicking on the [COVID-19 Advisories web page](#).

Please note that all schools where there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, who was contagious while at school, will receive a letter from Toronto Public Health to inform them about the possible exposure.

## Director of Education Search

The Toronto District School Board is in the process of recruiting its next Director of Education. This process is being led by a Trustee Director Search Committee, in partnership with Mandrake, an executive search firm. The job is tentatively scheduled to be posted on Wednesday, October 7, 2020.

For more information, including key dates, the recruitment process, how to apply and contact information, please visit the [Director Search web page](#).

## Saturday International Languages Credit Program

19 international language credit courses are available to current high school students. All courses are subject to sufficient enrollment. Online registration closes on October 9. [Visit the Saturday Credit Program web page](#) for more information. Classes begin on Saturday, October 17.

## TDSB Connects App Now Available!

TDSB has launched a new online app to help high school students stay connected and organized.

Phase 1 is designed with secondary students in mind, helping them stay organized with schoolwork, see their daily school calendar and stay in touch with their school community. By logging in with their TDSB school ID, their timetable is automatically populated allowing them to easily add notes, goals and details to each course.

Schools can also share announcements, updates, local calendars and more to help students stay connected and informed

Subsequent phases include features such as the student safety line, notifications and opportunities to share your voice, and a version for elementary students and families.

The TDSB Connects App supports our commitment to be more digitally friendly, reduce paper and find new and engaging ways to connect with students to support their success

Download the app now at the [Google Play Store](#) or the [Apple App Store](#).

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