



Matias de Dovitiis

TDSB School Trustee Ward 4 - Humber River-Black Creek
Tel: 416 395 8787 | Email: Matias.deDovitiis@tdsb.on.ca

SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Dear neighbours,

As the summer continues, I am sending out important information about the upcoming school year and other school-related news. It has been a privilege to serve as your TDSB Trustee since December 2022.

My goal as your Trustee is to advocate for better public schools in our area and to fight for investments that will help to improve our community. Inside this newsletter, you will find details about our ongoing efforts to rebuild and improve our schools, aiming to create better learning environments for students.

I am thrilled to announce that Westview Centennial Secondary School will offer a new arts program starting in September 2024. Additionally, Gracedale Public School started a new French Immersion Program last year. These initiatives are designed to bring specialized programs into the area, so that our students can receive the same quality programming as any other part of the city.

Significant capital projects have been completed or are nearing completion at a number of schools, including at Brookview MS, Elia MS, Gosford PS, Driftwood PS, Gulfstream PS, Daystrom PS, Lamberton PS, and Yorkwoods PS. Next year, we will begin work at Derrydown PS, Firgrove PS, Oakdale Park MS, and other schools in the area.

Our efforts to support student well-being include the expansion of breakfast programs. Our commitment to student well-being goes beyond academics; it's about nurturing healthy and ready-to-learn individuals. By continuing to expand these breakfast programs, we are investing in the future of our children and our community. A special thanks to the Children's Breakfast Club for helping with these initiatives.

Despite significant challenges posed by repeated budget reductions over the past five years, I remain dedicated to advocating for the needs of our students. The TDSB relies on provincial funding, which has made it difficult to meet our students' needs within the existing budget framework. I encourage

you to join me in advocating for our schools and students over the next three years as we strive to improve the school system in Toronto.

Looking ahead, I am hopeful for the new school year and to seeing the positive impact of these initiatives on our students and community. Let's continue working together to create a brighter future for our children.

Matias de Dovitiis

For regular updates, please sign up for my e-newsletter by emailing me at manas.dedovitiis@tdsb.on.ca or visiting my [webpage](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward4) at www.tdsb.on.ca/ward4

TDSB NEWS

Motion to Save Learn4Life Languages Program

As Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee, a large part of my time at the TDSB is spent trying to find efficiencies and prevent cuts to important educational resources for our students and our community. The Ministry of Education continues to underfund school boards across Ontario, many of which had to run a deficit last year to avoid serious cuts.

At the TDSB, the story is no different. Faced with having to cut many significant services or cut programs altogether, I voted to preserve important programs such as Learn4Life. We cannot balance our books on the back of educational resources that help our students, young and older.

Latin-America Heritage Month

In January 2024, my motion to change the observance of Latin-America History Month from April to October each year and to discontinue the observance of Hispanic Heritage Month was passed by TDSB Trustees.

The term "Latin-America" is a more inclusive geographic descriptor that encompasses all identities within the Latin-America diaspora residing in Canada, including Indigenous Peoples, Black African diasporic, and Black - Afro-Indigenous peoples. In contrast, the term "Hispanic" refers to only Spanish-speaking people, which is not everyone in the Latin-American continent and not fully inclusive of the diaspora. This change acknowledges and respects the diverse identities within the Latin-America diaspora, ensuring better representation and recognition of all peoples of Latin-America heritage.

'SUMMER 2024 UPDATE

Capital Repairs

Several schools in the neighborhood underwent construction to improve the infrastructure and additional outdoor amenities for students to use and enjoy. Some of the ongoing improvements include playgrounds, walkways, artificial fields, and more.

Some of these schools include:

- Yorkwoods PS: New playground and play areas
- Gosford PS: New playground, improved grounds
- Driftwood PS: Portables removed, new playground
- Gulfstream PS: New playground, improved back access

Figure 1: Unveiling Daystrom Public School's new artificial field.



Figure 2 Firgrove PS Updates



Firgrove PS

- Firgrove PS: Renovated garden and outdoor learning area at front of school. Includes new planters, paving, tree planting and seating.

- **Firgrove PS:** The renovated Full Day Kindergarten area features new climbing play structures, a small artificial turf court, sand play, raised planters, seating, line painting, and tree planting. The main play area includes a new play structure, replacement of old asphalt with a new walking running loop connected to adjacent neighbors, tree planting, seating options for students, new basketball opportunities, and line painting.
- **Lamberton PS:** New playground
- **Elia MS:** New track field, new soccer fields, new play areas, improved grounds
- **Brookview MS:** Replacing concrete paving at the main entrance, adding planting and student seating. Enhancing drop-off pick-up areas and pedestrian access. Upgrading the main play area with artificial turf, basketball courts, an outdoor stage, lounging areas, tree planting, and seating. Seating for an outdoor classroom, games tables, picnic benches, and table tennis. Adding a ramp for barrier-free access to Door 7, concrete benches, and bike racks.
- **More work is coming** Oakdale Park MS and Derrydown PS are scheduled for consultation in the coming year.

Working To Make Our Schools Better

Cellphone and Devices Consultation

We are also developing a new Cellphone Mobile Device Use in Schools Policy, aimed at enhancing students' success, belonging, and well-being.

A pre-consultation was conducted earlier this spring to gather feedback from school and community partners, ensuring the policy will meet legislative requirements and align with best practices. More on this will come in the fall.

Financial Literacy Motion

I worked with student Trustees to develop a motion that was approved at the Board to create a pathway towards better financial literacy in the classroom. Many students have told me that they find what they learn around financial literacy to be insufficient. This is a step to better equip our students for success.

This initiative includes:

- Re-evaluating current financial literacy learning modules.
- Actively promoting and utilizing existing financial literacy resources.

- Presenting a report to the Program and School Services Committee by fall 2024 on enhancing the visibility and usage of existing resources.
- Initiating broader implementation of enhanced financial literacy education in 2025-2026.

Parent Concern Protocol

Step 1 - Classroom Teacher

If you have any questions or concerns, your classroom teacher is the first person to go to.

Step 2 - School Principal

If you would like more information or have questions that are beyond the classroom, the school principal can help.

Step 3 - School Superintendents

Superintendents are responsible for a Network of Schools. They support school staff and can be contacted if you have any questions that the Principal cannot help with.

Step 4- Trustees

Trustees are your elected community officials. They are available to help you with the following areas of the TDSB:

- Concerns about your community Ideas and suggestions for the Board
- Items on Board Agenda
- Board policies under review
- Board Budget
- Collective Bargaining

Board Office

You can contact the Board Office directly for any questions or concerns related to:

- Continuing education
 - Night and summer school
 - Adult education
 - ESL
 - Board Documents
- Phone: 416 397 3000
Email: generalinquiries@TDSB.on.ca

School CALENDAR for 2024 – 2025

PA DAYS & HOLIDAYS	Date
Labour Day	September 2, 2024
Elementary PA Day	September 27, 2024
Board-wide PA Day	October 11, 2024
Thanksgiving	October 14, 2024
Board-wide PA Day	November 15, 2024
Board-wide PA Day	November 29, 2024
Winter Break	December 23, 2024, to January 3, 2025
Elementary PA Day	January 17, 2025
Secondary PA Day	January 30, 2025
Board-wide PA Day	February 14, 2025
March Break	March 10-14, 2025
Good Friday	April 18, 2025
Easter Monday	April 21, 2025
Victoria Day	May 19, 2025
Elementary PA Day	June 6, 2025
Secondary PA Day	June 26, 2025
Secondary PA Day	June 27, 2025