



Weekly Update – April 26, 2015

Items of Interest

As you may be aware, labour disruptions are currently impacting other school boards across the Greater Toronto Area. Please note that TDSB schools are not affected by these disruptions and all schools continue to operate as normal. The TDSB will provide updates specific to our board when

TDSB Excellence Awards – Congratulations Pat McCarthy!

I am so pleased to let the Ward know that amongst the fourteen outstanding individuals that have been selected to receive 2015 Excellence Awards is Pat McCarthy, Head Caretaker from Davisville Public School. Pat was nominated by the Davisville community and I was lucky enough to have direct and personal experiences with Pat as he was at Maurice Cody while my children attended. Please join me in congratulating Pat and the other staff members who go above and beyond to support our students. Pat will receive his award on May 5th.

Community Hubs

The TDSB Trustees has always understood that schools are more than just buildings – they are community hubs and that stronger communities are built when people living there can interact and participate regularly in quality programs that support health, cultural, social, educational and recreational opportunities. We continue to create community hubs with innovative programming such as the Priority Schools Initiative, Model Schools and the Community Use of Schools and Community Services. TDSB was also instrumental in helping to organize the Integrated Service Delivery Symposium held in Toronto in May 2014 that discussed the re-purposing of Ontario's public schools as 'community hubs' that serve children, families and the communities in which they live. At last week's board meeting, we passed a motion to support the Ontario Public School Board Trustees Association, writing to the Premier and Minister of Education advocating that the education sector needs to be included in the Community Hub Framework Advisory Group that is being chaired by Karen Pitre.

Planning for Growth in Ward 11

The situation in Ward 11 is not one of under-utilization and demonstrates why the board has to approach its capital issues in a careful and thoughtful way. New development and enrolment growth along the Yonge Street corridor have put tremendous pressure on area schools. Resident and Ratepayer Associations, along with parents and community within St Paul's were invited to come and hear TDSB staff discuss planning data and options that are being considered to address overcrowding in our schools and the challenges associated with funding both renewal and capital. Details can be found at <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward11/Ward11/Ward11Forum.aspx>

Davisville Rebuild

As you know, one of the solutions already considered by the board is the construction of a new 668 pupil place JK-6 elementary school on the Davisville site, including the Grade 7-8 Spectrum program. This proposal (now being explored by the Toronto Lands Corporation with a report back to Board in June) was initiated "to address overcrowding within the Yonge-Davisville community, to support the growth of the French Immersion program introduced at the site to relieve other programs in the area, and to address the



inadequate learning environments within the existing building.” The potential rebuild of Davisville School is also being looked at by the local community as an opportunity to model the Community Hub. But what is clear now, however, that the rebuild of Davisville is only part of the solution to the increased enrolment in our local schools.

Yonge-Eglinton Local Feasibility Study

As mentioned in an earlier update, part of the Board's Long-Term Accommodation Plan (a ten year vision for education in Toronto that includes processes for engaging the community and bringing annual plans to the Board each year that reflect the evolving needs of our city) staff are working on a Yonge-Eglinton Local Feasibility (LFT) process to study and develop solutions to address a number of accommodation issues being experienced at area schools. Over 12,000 residential units are in the approval process or under construction in Ward 11 and many of the projected numbers for enrolments of Junior Kindergarten students have already been exceeded by registrations. Staff are now exploring options in terms of accommodations – they are looking at boundary changes, grade changes, program relocations and future capital priority projects as part of this process. Local school and public consultation will follow the Local Feasibility Team study and will provide the communities an opportunity to review and provide into staff's proposed solutions and/or develop new ideas. The revised Long Term Program and Accommodation Strategy will come to the Board for approval in June. I should know more about the consultations in the next few weeks. Changes would be phased in beginning in September 2016.

Staffing Models

School-based staffing was approved at the Board Meeting in March in order to provide schools with sufficient time for staff scheduling and planning as well as to meet the required timelines for staffing in the Board's collective agreements. Board decisions about school-based staff allocations take into account legislative requirements including the Ministry of Education's Primary Class Size (PCS) and class size system average directives, Collective Agreement provisions and available resources. The number of staff for each school is then rolled out based on the projected enrolments for each school. In elementary schools, staffing committees meet to develop the best possible models given the numbers per each grade and class size restrictions. As noted above, although our planning staff do their best with projections, there are times where actual enrolments exceed projections as is happening in a few of the local elementary schools right now. Although reorganization tends to occur after the official count date in mid-September, Principals have made Superintendent Tondat aware and she is working with planning to see what might be possible. At this stage it depends on other schools' enrolments coming in lower – because as noted, the total number of staff has already been approved by the board given the funding the ministry has provided.

The actual class make-up is very carefully thought out by school staff. Even though schools have to work within certain restrictions, each and every child is placed with consideration to the whole child. Likewise, individual needs are also balanced with class dynamics and the needs and compatibility of the group. Some of the other factors taken into consideration are the teacher, classroom size, gender, work habits, emotional development, special education needs, English language development, grade being taught, etc. All teachers are able to teach and meet the diversity and a variety of ability levels in any classroom. It is important that all classes, single grade or combined grades, be considered a unified community of learners, where the individual needs and qualities of each student are honoured and nurtured. If you have specific concerns, please speak to your principal.

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PRO Grants

A reminder that applications for the 2015-2016 Parents Reaching Out Grants program are now open. **The last date to apply is Tuesday May 19, 2015.** Please read the program guidelines and terms and conditions prior to submitting your application. Apply online for a [School Council grant](#)

Reminder – Consultations on the Toronto District School Board

“We want to hear your ideas and input on ways to improve the governance structure at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB)”... as so it begins... again. Individuals can attend public sessions or share their thoughts online. For more information, please click <http://consultationsontdsb.ca/consultations-on-tdsb>. necessary. Check the website www.tdsb.on.ca

Fix Our Schools Update

Please take the opportunity to find out more about the parent-led grassroots campaign called Fix Our Schools (www.fixourschools.ca) that is focused on addressing the \$3.3-Billion repair backlog in TDSB schools. I hope you will visit their website and consider joining the Fix Our Schools mailing list to stay informed on the progress of the campaign and find out how you can help. Fix Our Schools just launched a letter-writing campaign urging Premier Wynne and Minister Sandals to work with the TDSB to find funding solutions for issues such as the \$3.3-billion repair backlog. This letter also expresses concerns about the TDSB Governance Panel consultations. You can participate in this letter-writing campaign by viewing the Fix Our Schools newsletter here: <http://us9.campaign-archive1.com/?u=33ed0a98313433d8705b1afd3&id=1ccc43618a&e=22a5b0472a>

You can join their mailing list here: www.fixourschools.ca/joinus/

TDSB STEM Showcases (5 May & 11 May)

TDSB STEM initiatives and the use of the engineering design process by our students across the system are highlighted at these showcases. The West STEM Showcase takes place on **5 May 2015 at George Harvey Collegiate Institute** in conjunction with the Junior FIRST Lego League. The East STEM Showcase takes place on **11 May 2015 at Don Mills Middle School** in conjunction with the “ReThink the Box” Challenge. There is a morning and afternoon session on each day. The morning session is 9:15 – 11:30 am and the afternoon session is 1:00 – 3:15 pm. In a marketplace style, TDSB students and teachers will display and share their learning from a problem-based, or inquiry focused STEM task during this school year. The featured projects:

- include a clearly developed question or inquiry; engineering design; and/or problem-based learning (in real world contexts), at the classroom or extracurricular level.
- identify learning goals and success criteria that focus on process and product.
- integrate knowledge and skills from multiple disciplines.
- require skills such as collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and innovation to achieve learning goals.

Parents and community members will observe, first-hand, the work of TDSB students that exemplifies TDSB’s STEM pedagogy. Educators will meet to share best practices and increase the scope of their professional network. Please visit www.tinyurl.com/stemshowcaseflyer for more information and www.tinyurl.com/stemshowcasevisitor to register for one of the TDSB STEM Showcases.



Save the Date

2015-2016 is Hodgson's 100th Anniversary year!

Hodgson's 100th anniversary celebration is scheduled for **Friday, May 13, 2016 and Saturday, May 14, 2016**. There will be more information coming about this event, but we wanted to make sure that you marked the dates on your calendar.

In the News

[Trustees head to court in May in fight to keep seats](#)

Toronto Star (April 24)

Summary: Two former trustees will plead their cases before a judge sometime in May after being ousted from office for failing to file their campaign expenses on time. Lawyer Jack Siegel, who represents both David Smith and Harkirat Singh, said via email that "all our court materials have been filed, and were served (Wednesday). Both applications are to be heard in the Superior Court, in Brampton. Smith, an incumbent, was removed as trustee from Scarborough Centre (Ward 19) on the Toronto public board and Singh, a newcomer, represented two Brampton wards on the Peel District School Board.

[What to do with TDSB? A new panel mulls breaking it up and other possible reforms](#)

Globe and Mail (April 17)

Summary: Breaking up the Toronto District School Board would be a drastic change, but it is just one of several radical ideas on the table for a panel examining the board. When Education Minister Liz Sandals announced the seven-person panel last month, she said it would look at whether the TDSB is too big. However, the members are also researching how a couple of dozen other boards operate, said their chair, former Toronto mayor Barbara Hall.

[Meeting on TDSB governance poorly attended](#)

Town Crier (April 15)

New Invitations

- **Toronto Police 53 Division is having their Annual Open House on May 2nd between 11am and 4pm – 75 Eglinton Av**
BBQ, Snacks and Drinks; Various TPS Units – Marine, Mounted, Police Dogs; Vintage Police Car Display and Court Services as well as a tour of 53rd Division
- **Tuesday, May 5th - "Night at the Movies - Raising Awareness for Youth Mental Health and Addiction."** The event is during Mental Health Week in Canada and Children's Mental Health Week in Ontario. The event will begin at 6:30 pm with a reception and will then feature the Sony Pictures movie premiere "To Write Love on her Arms," starring Kat Dennings (Two Broke Girls), Rupert Friend (Homeland) and Chad Michael Murray. The movie showing will take place at St Michael's College School Theatre. Following the movie a discussion will occur with a representative from Partners for Mental Health and a youth with lived experience. For ticket information, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/night-at-the-movies-raising-awareness-of-youth-mental-health-addiction-tickets-16498909683>.



Secondary School PA Day June 24*, 25, 2015

Board-wide PA Day June 26, 2015

* High School Semester Change: The first day of second semester is 30 January 2015. The seven days noted for secondary school include a PA day only for semestered schools on 29 January 2015 and a PA Day for full-year schools only on 24 June 2015.

Before scheduling events, please check the TDSB Days of Significance Calendar

[2014 - 2015 Days of Significance](#)

School Year 2015-2016 Dates to Remember - School Year Holidays (as per Ministry of Education)

Labour Day: September 7, 2015

First Day of School: September 8, 2015

Thanksgiving: October 12, 2015

Christmas Break: December 21, 2015 – January 1, 2016

Family Day: February 15, 2016

Mid-Winter Break: March 14-18, 2016

Good Friday: March 25, 2016

Easter Monday: March 28, 2016

Victoria Day: May 23, 2016

Last Day: June 29, 2016 (Elementary) June 27, 2016 (Secondary)

If you no longer wish to receive these weekly e-mails, please let me know at shelley.laskin@tdsb.on.ca