



Weekly Update – April 5, 2015

Items of Interest

April is Genocide Awareness Month in TDSB

The United Nations has defined "genocide" as acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. Genocide is a crime under international law. On 6 March 2013, in order to build "mutual respect, understanding and peaceful coexistence ... through learning about past atrocities," the Toronto District School Board passed a resolution declaring April as Genocide Awareness Month in TDSB. TDSB joins academic institutions, advocacy groups and legislatures around the world in observing this Month by commemorating and remembering those who have suffered in past atrocities, as well as by educating about ongoing genocides and human rights atrocities throughout the world. The month April was selected for its significance in marking the beginning of major 20th century genocides that include the 1915 campaign against Armenians, Assyrians and Pontian Greeks; the genocides of European Jews and of Ukrainians, both in 1933; the Cambodian genocide in 1975; and the campaigns against Bosnian Muslims in 1992; Tutsi Rwandans in 1994; and Darfuris in 2003. In 2008, this Board led the way among Ontario school districts by piloting the TDSB Grade 11 History course entitled Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity.

What is the Day of Pink? (from <http://dayofpink.org/about/>)

"April 8th, 2015 marks the International Day of Pink. It is a day where communities across the country, and across the world, can unite in celebrating diversity and raising awareness to stop homophobia, transphobia, transmisogyny, and all forms of bullying. The International Day of Pink was started in Nova Scotia when 2 straight high school students saw a gay student wearing a pink shirt being bullied. The 2 students intervened, but wanted to do more to prevent homophobic & transphobic bullying. They decided to purchase pink shirts, and a few days later got everyone at school to arrive wearing pink, standing in solidarity. The result was that an entire school took a stand and began working together to prevent homophobic & transphobic bullying. **The message was clear: anyone can bully, any can be victimized by bullying, but together we can stop it.** Each year on the second Wednesday of April, millions of people wear pink and take a stand. The Day of Pink is a symbol, a spark that empowers and inspires youth across Canada to create amazing social change!" I look forward to participating in the Toronto Police Service - TDSB kick-off at Forest Hill Collegiate Institute.

Staff Preliminary Update on Ministry of Education 2015-16 Grants for Student Needs (GSNs)

We were able to hear staff's preliminary analysis of the 2015-16 GSN funding at Budget Committee last Wednesday. Although final variances will not be known until the Ministry of Education releases the electronic file for boards to do their detailed grant calculations (EFIS) in late April, based on primary analysis of the GSN announcement, staff is currently projecting approximately a further \$3M change in operating grants and above the \$16.5M estimated in the approved budget of 11 March 2015. We plan to manage the discrepancies in-year and propose no additional cuts to programs or services. To read the complete staff report, please click on [GSN Briefing Note Apr 1, 2015](#).

In summary, although GSNs may not have changed provincially in total - there are impacts to different grants the TDSB receives - top-up, declining enrolment, special education and LOG. GSN impact in



Declining Enrolment Grant creates an immediate impact of -\$3.0M based on changes in the model. For the School Foundation Grant there will be a 3-year phase in for changes. In the preliminary analysis this will create a -.5M gap. The elimination of top-up funding over 3 years will also impact the TDSB, but at the same time the Ministry is increasing benchmarks in operations and that will help. Staff anticipate the overall impact to be -\$4.5M. Special Education is "sweatered" and right now the TDSB spends \$20M more than we receive and even with that there are still challenges to meet student need. The per pupil Special Education funding is based on a proportion of all students but the High Needs Amount is based on complex formula that contains statistics that are out of date. We expected the Special Education High Needs Amount to be a -\$6.5M reduction this year and in 15-16 anticipated -\$5M – but now is it anticipated at -\$2M. Change in LOI are sweatered as a group - board must report on how funds are spent – and there is some concern there could be massive reorganization if the Board does not meet class size targets in Grades 1-3. 90% of these classes must be 20 students and under with only 10% up to 23... right now the TDSB is at 86% and not 90%.

As mentioned in last week's update, the grant for School Renewal increased to \$112M – the Ministry recalculated TDSB's Facility Condition Index (FCI) backlog for 2015-16 and it is now \$3.3B! The increase is because the TDSB is now getting its proportional share of \$500M. Will capital also be pro-rated for the TDSB? We have 12.5% of population but received less than 5% of capital funding - we live in hope... I urge you to visit the Board's new website "Our Schools" <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ourschools/home.aspx> for background as well as clicking on <http://fixourschools.ca/>. "Fix our Schools" is a parent advocacy group that deserves your consideration.

City of Toronto Staff Report – Schools as Community Assets: A Policy Agenda for the City-School Boards Advisory Council

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX4.4>

In Councillor Matlow's recent update he writes "During this week's meeting, I believe Council had an honest and thoughtful discussion on Schools as Community Assets. Included in our work plan, Council has given our committee a mandate and responsibility to try to ensure community uses for schools, including child care, green spaces, recreation, Brownies & Girls Guides, ESL classes and others, are considered when a site is considered for closure or sale." Councillor Matlow chairs the committee along with Councillors Christin Carmichael Greb, Gary Crawford, Janet Davis, Sarah Doucette and Frances Nunziata. TDSB Trustees Pam Gough and Jennifer Story were appointed by the Board to represent us on the Committee.

The Report that was approved last week has the following summary –

"This report clarifies the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) ten year plan for school closures and summarizes the implications of this plan in light of the City's fourfold interest in schools as community assets:

1. Schools as spaces for child care and early learning;
2. School lands as green space;
3. Schools as sites for non-educational services and programming; and
4. Schools to serve growth areas.

This report recommends that the City pursue a new multilateral relationship with the School Boards and the Province of Ontario in relation to the disposition of school boards properties in Toronto, in order to realize and retain the value of schools as community assets. The new City-School Boards Advisory Committee,

Twitter: @shelleylaskin

Webpage: www.tdsb.on.ca/Laskin



approved by the Toronto City Council at its February 2015 meeting, is the appropriate body to investigate and recommend options for this process.”

I think we all agree on the concept of using schools for community hubs – the issues has always been funding as Boards are only funded for K-12 education. Schools as community infrastructure – used for education as well as community services.

Within the report is the key sentence...the “identification of capital funding sources for school renewal in Toronto.” At our last ward forum on March 9th, Associate Director Carla Kisko and Manager of Planning Andrew Gowdy presented the Board’s advocacy for increased provincial funding and provincial revisions to allow TDSB to receive Education Development Charges (EDCs) while the board continues to consider development opportunities, offer leasing partnerships with social service providers, and sell redundant sites after careful analysis. But staff also suggest it is time for a paradigm shift – and presented a new concept – Under a formal partnership agreement, responsibility for TDSB school sites is shared with the City of Toronto. In exchange for shared ownership of school sites, the TDSB would receive infrastructure funding from the City for school capital purposes... our hope is that the new committee is a forum for discussion with the City of Toronto.

Within Ward 11 there are currently over 12,000 residential units are in the approval process or under construction. Our biggest issue is dealing with growth within our schools. New funding sources are critical. Source: Toronto Official Plan, City of Toronto, Consolidated December 2010; City of Toronto Geospatial Competency Centre; TDSB Strategy and Planning.

Parents and Teachers Making Connections Conference

Saturday April 11, 2015, 9:30am - 2:00pm, Westview Centennial Secondary School

755 Oakdale Rd, North York, ON

Westview Centennial Secondary School in partnership with the African Heritage Educators Network (AHEN) and the Toronto District School Board WR2 Family of Schools, in line with Donna Quan’s Years of Actions, brings you the 5th Parents and School – Making Connections Conference. The theme for this year’s conference is, “Roadmap to Excellence, Enhancing the Parent voice”. Our keynote speaker for the event will be Karl Subban, retired TDSB Principal. Please register by April 8th at:

<https://secure.tdsb.on.ca/survey/survey.asp?id=1637>

Model Schools for Inner Cities 2015 Parent Academy Conference

By Parents for Parents – Education, Empowerment and Employment

East – Saturday, April 18 at Cedarbrae CI 10:00-2:30

West – Saturday, April 25 at Thisletown CI 10:00-2:30

Both locations will offer light breakfast, lunch, transportation, child-minding, interpreters.

To register click on <https://surveys.tdsb.on.ca/index.php?r=survey/index/sid/887835/lang/en>

Registration is now open for the 2015 TDSB Healthy Schools 5k Run/Walk

Saturday May 23, 2015, Downsview Park – This celebration of healthy active living is open to all TDSB communities. Registration is open to: TDSB Group Organizers, TDSB Staff, TDSB Secondary School Students and TDSB Community Members - Register at www.tdsb.on.ca/5k.

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Arts Access Fund

A reminder about an exciting opportunity for your child to study art, drama or music with a 90% financial subsidy. Scholarship students are chosen on the basis of interest and financial need. Classes start April 7. New students will be accepted until April 18th. Visit www.artsaccessfund.org or call (416) 961-1502 ext 303.

Worth Repeating

- **An Evening with Cheryl Pounder, Gold Medal Champion – Breaking Down Barriers to Mental Health for Kindergarten – Grade 8 Parents and Grade 7-8 Students** Wednesday April 8, 2015 at 7:00 p.m., Forest Hill Jr. & Sr. Public School, 78 Dunloe Road (North Building – Auditorium)
- **Cedarvale Marketplace at Cedarvale Public School, 145 Ava Road** Friday, April 17, 4-8pm and Saturday, April 18, 10am-4pm
- **E-Summer School** provides flexibility by being available 24/7 to fit students' schedules. Get the details at: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/eLearning> and check out this video on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ftk7oRjdbI>
- **Evergreen Canada's Tips on Taking Active Transportation to School and Beyond**
- Students who walk, roll, or take other forms of active transportation to and from school experience many benefits. Check our [Active & Safe Routes to School guide for parents](#)
- **Clean Toronto Together – Friday, April 17th at 2pm** On Friday, April 17th at 2 pm, students from across Toronto are encouraged to help rejuvenate our city's green spaces by picking up litter in their school yard or neighbourhood park. Schools can register by filling out the [School Clean-Up Day form](#). For registration details, resources, and campaign updates visit the [TDSB's Clean Toronto Together campaign webpage](#). You'll be amazed at what we can accomplish in as little as 20 minutes!
- **Legislative Page Program – Apply before June 15** The program is open to students who are in Grade 7 or 8, have very good grades (80% or higher), are involved with their school or in their community, have an interest in current events and get along well with other students and adults E-mail: page_program@ontla.ola.org.
- **Humewood – Supporting Your Child Series - 15 Cherrywood Ave**
The Humewood community has invited parents in WR08 to join them for a series of info meetings: Talking with Your Teen, April 23, 6:00pm, presented by Toronto Public Health, Register: <http://goo.gl/forms/nV26n95oc5> Child minding available upon request. Please email Barbara.Sandler@tdsb.on.ca to register for child minding.
- **Parent and Community Engagement Office Workshops**
Workshops on “Running an Effective School Council and Secondary Transitions”. For workshop dates and locations visit: [Workshops](#).
- **The OTIP Teaching Awards**
Deadline for submitting nominations is March 31, 2015. <http://en.teachingawards.ca/>

Hold the Dates for Future Ward Forums

- **May 21 – Topic TBC**

Board & Committee Meetings

- Planning & Priorities Committee, April 8, 2015, 7 p.m.
- Inner City Advisory Committee, April 9, 2015, 6 p.m.

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- SEAC, April 13, 2015, 7 p.m.
- PIAC, April 14, 2015, 6:30 p.m.
- Regular Board Meeting, April 15, 7 p.m.
- Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee, April 16, 2015, 7 p.m.
- FSLAC, April 21, 2015, 7 p.m.
- Human Resources & Professional Learning Committee, April 22, 2015, 5 p.m.
- Community Use of Schools Advisory Committee, April 23, 2015, 9 a.m.
- Equity Policy Advisory Committee, April 23, 2015, 6 p.m.
- Program & School Services Committee, April 29, 2015, 5 p.m.

2014-2015 School Year Calendar

TDSB's school year calendars are on Google Calendar (add to yours!).

Elementary: <http://t.co/SRsxJzPYgL> + Secondary: <http://t.co/s1sWVP0naB>

Victoria Day May 18, 2015

Elementary School PA Day June 5, 2015

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