

November 9, 2014

Items of Interest from Trustee Shelley Laskin, Ward 11

Website click on [Trustee Shelley Laskin](#)

[www.tdsb.on.ca/laskin](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/laskin)

Twitter @shelleylaskin

### Ward Forums, PIAC and FSLAC Reps

Thank you Betheny Maheu, parent from Davisville's French Immersion program who has come forward to be FSLAC Representative. I am still looking for a PIAC Representative and Alternate. For more information, please click on [Parent Involvement Advisory Committee](#). If you are interested, you might wish to attend the PIAC Conference on the 15<sup>th</sup>; information in the Events Section. Ward Forum dates will come next week!

### Remembrance Day, November 11, 2014

I am so proud of the work done in schools to commemorate the sacrifices of people in all armed conflicts. As you know, Remembrance Day marks the anniversary of the official end of the World War I hostilities on November 11, 1918. World War I was a massive conflict was played out over the whole globe, but particularly in Europe, where troops from Canada supported the Allied forces. Now Remembrance Day commemorates those who died in all armed conflicts, particularly in and since World War I. I am sorry I can't be in all places at once but I have the privilege of laying the wreath on behalf of the Toronto District School Board at Old City Hall. As my dad was a World War II Vet, with the North Nova Scotia Highlanders and part of the Liberation Force in Germany, it is particularly poignant for me as a way to commemorate his memory too.

### History of the Toronto District School Board War Veterans' Association

The Toronto District School Board War Veterans' Association was founded in 1936 as the Toronto Board of Education War Veterans' Association. Membership was restricted to veterans who were employees of the Board. Initially, the Association was composed entirely of World War I veterans. Later, the membership expanded to include Board staff who were veterans of World War II. In recent years, declining numbers have greatly affected the group. In 2014, after 78 years of service, the Association was officially disbanded. Thank you to all who served and continue to serve in the pursuit of peace. "Never Forget"



### Further Update on the Consultation – Revised Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum

At the People For Education Conference yesterday, Minister Sandals noted they have asked expert reviewers to look at the curriculum that was developed between 2008 and 2010 and see what needs to be updated. In terms of consultation with parents, in order to ensure they were consulting with people who are parents of elementary students across the province – and all four systems – one parent from each publicly funded elementary school – 4000 people – will be asked to fill in the questionnaire. The form will go to the Principal with the hopes that it can be discussed at School Council and then the Chair submit on behalf of the collective with the consensus. With Secondary, the Ministry acknowledges the potential difference between student and parent reality at secondary – as a result, they are consulting directly with a number of student groups, for example Student Trustees, Student Advisory Committee focus groups, etc. For more information, click on [Background Information for Parents](#).

### Requests for Letters of Reference

From time to time, schools receive requests from parents for reference letters on behalf of students. The Toronto District School Board has a policy which states "reference letters will no longer be requested from Board staff by specialized schools and programs that have auditions" (PR612). This also applies to requests for letters of reference for students applying to private schools. A student's report card and Ontario Student Record are sufficient to provide the relevant information on the student's achievement and educational profile.

## OPSBA Updates

I had the opportunity to hear Barry Finlay, Director – Special Education Policy and Programs Branch speak to the **Special Education Funding Overview**. Below, please find some points from the session.

- 12 exceptionalities for Special Education are not based on medical diagnosis, but on the impact on learning
- Of 330,000 children served across the province, only 56% are formally identified; the rest not formally identified and receive services – growth of unidentified over the last number of years
- For the 2012-13 school year, 186,545 students identified as “exceptional” – autism has risen from 5-17K
- Huge variation across boards – public and Catholic – different across boards
- In 2014-15 Special Education Grant (SEG) - \$2.72B – increase of 67% since 2002-03
- It’s an incremental grant – raise students to a level of fairness to help them access the curriculum – has not been meant to fund total – still foundation grants provided, etc.
- Components – 6 components –
  1. Per Pupil amount (SEPPA) – divided by population for general delivery
  2. High Needs Amount (HNA)
  3. Special Equipment Amount (SEA) – two components – 85% allocation and 15% for claims
  4. Special Incidence Portion (SIP) – health and safety – students who require more than two adults at all times
  5. Facilities Amount (FA) – care, treatment, custody programs – partnerships with agencies and/or hospitals and boards – focus is treatment and we provide education
  6. Behaviour Expertise Amount (BEA) – funding for hiring of additional board level Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) expertise to support principals, teachers and multi-disciplinary transition teams
- Evolution of Special Education Funding – Changes since 2007 – attempt to create a process to become more equitable – first – stabilize funding even with declining enrolment as working through the process – introduction of MOV and BEA in 10-11 and began consultation of HVA – introduced \$10M new dollars for HNA in 14-15, however, the majority of the increase was in funding for current staff – did not necessarily mean additional monies for new services or staffing
- New HNA Model being rolled out 2014-18 – 4 years of changes – by 2017-18 approximately 73% of the total HNA funds will be allocated through SESPM – approximately 25% of model each year
- Second component when fully implemented Measures of Variability (MOV) – 24% of total HNA funds
- Component 3 would be approximately 3% of HNA - fixed amount per board \$450K – understand there are a basic level of service for all boards – building something that is fair
- Statistical regression model based upon data on all 2 million children and all the board’s data – then 2006 census was layered and then Dr Wilms developed additional data including ability to tie to postal codes – predicts the needs in boards – regression around the mean
- Redistributive impacts of change in school boards – up and down that is meant to provide greater fairness and equity within the system – many increase and many decrease

I also heard a session where Mary Jean Gallagher, Chief Student Achievement Office , ADM Student Achievement Division spoke to **Achieving Excellence in Ontario Education**

- 4 part renewed vision
  1. Children and students will be personally successful, economically production and actively engaged citizens.
  2. We will achieve this by continuously developing a high quality teaching profession and strong leadership at all levels of the system.
  3. Our system will be characterized by high expectations and success for all.
  4. It will be responsive, high quality, accessible and integrated, from early learning and childcare to adult education.
- Key is to narrow the achievement gap...
- **Renewed goals**

1. Achieving Excellence – children and students of all ages will achieve high levels of academic performance, acquire valuable skills, and demonstrate good citizenship. Educations will be supported in learning continuously and will be recognized as among the best in the world.
  2. Ensuring Equity – all children and students will be inspired to reach their full potential, with access to rich learning experiences that begin at birth and continue into adulthood
  3. Promoting Well-Being – all children and students will develop enhanced mental and physical health, a positive sense of self and belonging, and the skills to make positive choices
  4. Enhancing Public Confidence – Ontarians will continue to have confidence in a publicly funded education system that helps develop new generations of confident, capable, and caring citizens
- EQAO is a floor, not a ceiling... Gallagher notes it is a standards-based test not a standardized test – PISA – calibrated to mid-Level 2 – built into the Ontario EQAO test is the degree to which a student has learned the Ontario curriculum – as a result, Level 3 writing relates back to the curriculum... was it taught?

### Resources from “Tweets” you may find interesting

@shelleylaskin Working 'cross government on behalf of constituents - vitally important @Carolyn\_Bennett

@DrEricHoskins @JoshMatlow pic.twitter.com/dET9Shor1f

@trusteehoward: #p4e2014 Free download of parent resources at <http://t.co/SdRyX08err>

@Anniekidder: #p4e2014 Important skills optimism, zest, grit, curiosity, social intelligence, gratitude, self-control. Things teachers love & support.

@metowe: Nominate your fave teacher in the @StaplesCanada Educators contest and they could win a Me to We trip to Ecuador! <http://t.co/qbiO4yUSAc>

@louisebrownstar Only "Heck yes!" means Yes. Consent, sex ed and 14 tips for talking about sex with your kids <http://on.thestar.com/1xvCES9> #onted #p4e2014

@louisebrownstar Main theme #p4e2014, from expert after expert, in session after session: it's the human relationships above all that shape kids' lives.

### Worth Repeating

#### High School Information Nights

Parents are encouraged to attend their home school's Grade 8 Information Evening as well as the Information Evening at other schools you are interested in. The information evenings are listed on the TDSB website. Click on [Open Houses and Information Nights](#).

#### Early French Immersion (SK entry)

Deadline for applications for this program is December 5th, 2014. Click

[https://secure.tdsb.on.ca/pars/\(S\(xvaj3t45nwodmm55vkb0ct45\)\)/public/welcome.aspx](https://secure.tdsb.on.ca/pars/(S(xvaj3t45nwodmm55vkb0ct45))/public/welcome.aspx)

For a complete list of Information Evenings, please click on:

<http://tdsb.on.ca/ElementarySchool/SchoolChoices/FrenchPrograms/InformationEvenings.aspx>

**Note - The application period for Junior Extended French or Middle Immersion (Grade 4 Entry) is between January 5th and January 29th, 2015.**

### Events of Interest

#### PIAC Presents: The 8th Annual Parent Involvement Makes a Difference Conference

**Saturday November 15, 2014, 8:30 am** at Earl Haig Secondary School

For information visit: [www.tdsb.on.ca/parentconference](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/parentconference)

#### Parent Evenings organized by the WR08 Community, Culture and Care Committee

- **Kids Have Stress Too** Public Health through Con-Ed  
Davisville JPS on Thursday, November 20, 2014, 6:30-9:30 pm
- **Mental Health Parent Information Night**  
Northern SS on Wednesday, November 26, 2014 at 7:00 pm

## TDSB Board and Committee Meetings

Wed, Nov 12	5pm	5050 Yonge St	Program & School Services Committee
	7pm	5050 Yonge St	Planning & Priorities Committee
Thu, Nov 13	9am	5050 Yonge St	Community Use of Schools Advisory Committee
Tue, Nov 18	5pm	Brockton	Aboriginal Community Advisory Committee
	6:30pm	5050 Yonge St	Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC)
Wed, Nov 19	4:30pm	5050 Yonge St	Administration, Finance & Accountability Committee
Thu, Nov 20	6pm	5050 Yonge St	Equity Policy Advisory Committee
	6pm	5050 Yonge St	Inner City Advisory Committee
Fri, Nov 21	10:15am	5050 Yonge St	Early Years Advisory Committee
Mon, Nov 24	4pm	5050 Yonge St	Student Nutrition Advisory Committee
Tue, Nov 25	7pm	5050 Yonge St	Community Use of Schools Advisory Committee AGM
Wed, Nov 26	7pm	5050 Yonge St	Regular Board Meeting (Last of Current Term 2010-2014)
Mon, Dec 1	7pm	5050 Yonge St	Organizational Meeting (First of New Term 2014-2018)
Mon, Dec 8	4:30pm	5050 Yonge St	Audit Committee
	7pm	5050 Yonge St	SEAC
Wed, Dec 10	6:30	5050 Yonge St	PIAC
Thu, Dec 11	9am	5050 Yonge St	Community Use of Schools Advisory Committee
	6pm	5050 Yonge St	Equity Policy Advisory Committee
Tue, Dec 16	9:30am	5050 Yonge St	Inner City Advisory Committee
Wed, Dec 17	7pm	5050 Yonge St	Regular Meeting

## Dates to Remember

### 2014-2015 School Year Calendar

TDSB's school year calendars are on Google Calendar (add to yours!). Elementary: <http://t.co/SRxsJzPYgL>  
+ Secondary: <http://t.co/s1sWVP0naB>

Board-wide PA Day	November 14, 2014
Board-wide PA Day	December 5, 2014
Christmas Break	December 22, 2014 to January 2, 2015 (inclusive)
Last day of school	December 19, 2014
School resumes	January 5, 2015
Elementary PA Day	January 23, 2015
Secondary PA Day	(Semestered Schools only) January 29, 2015
Board-wide PA Day	February 13, 2015
Family Day	February 16, 2015
March Break	March 16 to 20, 2015
Good Friday	April 3, 2015
Easter Monday	April 6, 2015
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](#)

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