

September 21, 2014

Items of Interest from Trustee Shelley Laskin, Ward 11

Website click on [Trustee Shelley Laskin](#)

www.tdsb.on.ca/laskin

Twitter [@shelleylaskin](#)

EQAO – Use the Data in Context

Before discussion of EQAO results recently announced, it is important to set the context. . . below is excerpt from a Fact Sheet prepared by the TDSB.

“According to the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), its provincial assessment results and reports are intended to “provide educators, parents and the public with a snapshot of how well Ontario students are fulfilling the curriculum expectations in reading, writing and math.” The results can be an important indicator, and the data have been “used widely to focus support for student achievement in school communities across Ontario”. While this information has been broadly employed as part of the data for school planning and programming, there has also been growing misuse of these publicly available EQAO school-by-school results by different interest groups for judging school performance or for school ranking purposes. The intent of this fact sheet is to explain why EQAO data, especially the publicly available results, alone cannot indicate school success; nor can they be the sole evidence to determine whether or not certain school improvement projects are working. The reasons are highlighted as follows:

1. EQAO results do not reflect the performance of all grades or all students in a school...
2. Comparison of EQAO annual results cannot tell if a school has improved or not...
3. EQAO assessment is not intended to measure students’ ongoing progress...
4. EQAO publicly available results cannot fully capture improvements made by all students...
5. Comparing school-by-school EQAO results without context is misleading...
6. Using any single measure to judge school success is over-simplistic and can be inaccurate...
7. School effects take time to show and measure...”

To read the entire Fact Sheet please click on [Can EQAO Results Determine School Success?](#)

Achievement and EQAO (from the TDSB website)

EQAO – or the Education Quality and Accountability Office – is an independent agency of the Ontario government. Its provincial assessment program for primary, junior and secondary students provides parents, teachers and the public with information about student achievement that will help improve teaching and learning. EQAO assesses all students in Grade 3 and Grade 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.

View "[A Parent's Guide to EQAO Tests.](#)"

There are also two secondary school assessments:

- Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) taken annually in March
- Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics taken in January by students enrolled in first-semester mathematics courses and in May/June to students enrolled in second-semester and full-year courses
- [Learn more about EQAO.](#)

How did we do?

Learn more about how TDSB students are doing on EQAO testing. Here are our most current results:

- [2013-14 Assessments of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics for Primary and Junior Divisions](#)

For information about Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy in TDSB schools, click on:

- [Fact Sheet: Mathematics and Numeracy in TDSB Schools](#)
- [Fact Sheet: English and Literacy in TDSB Schools](#)

The TDSB Supports Equity and Inclusion

I was very proud when Chair Mari Rutka made a statement on behalf of the board in reply to concerns that have been raised regarding the TDSB’s equitable and inclusive support of all their staff, students and community members. “The position of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) regarding matters of equity and inclusion is clear and long-standing. . . We are committed to creating learning environments where people of all gender identities, gender expressions and sexual orientations feel empowered and supported. . . we work continuously to create TDSB schools

and workplaces that are safe, accepting and free from discrimination. This work continues... We firmly distance ourselves from remarks or actions that hurt or discriminate against our students, our staff or our communities. We support the work and policies of our board.” To read the full statement posted on my website click on [The TDSB Supports Equity and Inclusion](#)

Trustee Expenses (from the TDSB website www.tdsb.on.ca/aboutus/accountability/trusteexpenses)

“In accordance with a board motion passed on Friday, September 12, 2014, Trustee expenses for the 2013-2014 year have been posted below in the form of a summary report divided by expense category. Moving forward, Trustee expenses, including those of the Office of the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Board, will be posted on the Board website on a quarterly basis within 30 days of the end of each quarter to ensure greater transparency and accountability - **Trustee Expenses 2013-14.**”

Please note that I have posted additional information on the Expenses page on my TDSB website <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward11/Ward11/TrusteeExpenses.aspx> including a summary of my [Professional Development and Lifelong Learning](#). On our personal websites we are able to post more detailed expenses. If you need the link, please send me an e-mail to shelley@shelleylaskin.ca.

Stress in Children

There is no question the work of Dr. Stuart Shanker on self-regulation to help children cope with stress is critical as we move forward. In the TDSB, stress and coping with stress is addressed through the Board’s [Children and Youth Mental Health Strategy](#). Schools have Mental Health and Well-Being Teams (e.g. Northern’s WellNSS team). Some other ways stress and anxiety have been addressed in our schools:

- Professional development sessions addressing mental health issues including stress and anxiety – delivered by TDSB staff (anxiety workshops) and outside agencies to schools staffs and administrators;
- Partnerships with outside agencies that focus on mental health;
- Some schools have purchased and use exercise equipment(exercise bicycles, exercise balls) to help reduce stress in students; and
- Secondary students often receive specific strategies in test taking and exam preparation in order to help reduce stress.

To learn more about specific actions within your schools, please speak with your Principal and/or Vice-Principal.

Suicide Intervention Training

As a follow-up to World Suicide Prevention Day, I am very glad to let you know that Suicide Intervention Training focussing on a consistent process to assess and intervene with students at risk of suicide has been developed. According to the Director, Professional Support Services staff, Caring and Safe Schools staff and the Mental Health and Addictions Nurses have participated in this training. Awareness training will be made available to all classroom teachers and more in depth training will be provided to different school staff such as guidance counsellors and administrators.

Green Bins... becoming mandatory

Please note that the Director has informed us that the TDSB’s voluntary green bin program started in 2013 and currently has 105 schools participating, with an additional 93 sties awaiting delivery of collection containers will soon be mandated. “The City of Toronto has mandated that all TDSB will participate in green bin recycling or the City will invoke its “all or nothing” policy. If the TDSB does not fulfil its obligations under the all or nothing policy, the City will not pick up the TDSB’s solid waste or recycling, resulting in an additional annual \$600,000 expense.” As a result, all other TDSB sites will start small scale green bin programs in January 2015. Please watch for more information on this coming soon!

Resources from “Tweets” you may find interesting

@LisaLaFlammeCTV: Should more schools have this? Winnipeg school debuts buddy bench: It's 'more than a bench' <http://t.co/KqKgZkZNtO>

@Primary_Ed: Traditional Learner vs. 21st Century Learner #edchat #edcoach

<http://t.co/dFGDX1UmQm> #edchat #edtech #satchat #sunchat

@DonVrooman: Need more #math? Here are 10 Math TED talks to blow your mind. #OntEdVotes

<https://t.co/X3xEgPLOKc>

@OPSBA_Official: Our second #OntEdVotes PSA is out! <http://t.co/Q6WTIPDsoZ>. [Vote on October 27!](#)

@OPSBA_Official: Great presentation from @taylor_gunn of @studentvote @CIVIX_Canada last night.

Register today! #ontedvotes <http://t.co/GjqtB7GQdb>

@edutopia: One simple way to turn parents into partners: <http://t.co/yBtKsVz0Ua>. #InstaVideo

#BestYearEver <http://t.co/1MSw234VRL>

In the News

[TDSB wants development funding for overcapacity schools and \\$3.5B in repairs backlog](#)

InsideToronto (September 18)

Summary: There is an alternative to selling off property as a way of generating the desperately needed funds for repairs and maintenance. It comes in the form of Education Development Charges (EDC) – funds from condominium developers building new residential complexes. But, there’s a catch. As the regulations are currently written, school boards can only use EDCs for the purchase and upgrade of land. In addition, one of the conditions of EDCs is boards must prove that they are at capacity in the elementary or the high school system – which the TDSB is not. Ward 7 may be mostly over capacity, but there is space across the board.

[Trustees wanted stronger expense policy](#)

Toronto Star (September 18) *Letter to the Editor by Chair Mari Rutka*

Taxpayers have been rightfully upset to learn about past trustee expenses at the TDSB. But here’s what you should also know. The TDSB’s trustees and director Donna Quan asked for the auditing that reported the expenses. We asked because we knew there was no clarity in how expenses were being claimed. And, since and because of that report, we have made the changes needed to make sure future expenses are fully compliant with a new and much tougher expense policy, which came into effect in May of this year...Moving forward, there are tighter controls and enhanced oversight over every dollar that is spent from our office budgets. It’s my hope that with our new policy in place and a renewed sense of personal responsibility for all trustees, that a new board will be able to begin its term with all the tools required to make appropriate expense decisions — decisions that will be clear, consistent and earn the confidence of every taxpayer.

Nominate an Outstanding Principal

The Learning Partnership is seeking outstanding principals who are doing something truly remarkable. According to the Learning Partnership, “Canada’s Outstanding Principals” demonstrate innovation, have an entrepreneurial spirit and are creative in finding solutions and opportunities. Nominations are invited from school boards, colleagues, parents, teachers, students and all community members. Please consider nominating one of our outstanding leaders. Peggy Aitchison, Principal of FHCI received this honour two years ago. Get Started – click on <http://cop.thelearningpartnership.ca/> - Deadline is November 3, 2014. For more information about the Canada’s Outstanding Principals Program, please contact: Jon Powell, Canada’s Outstanding Principals Program Manager, 416 440 5112 jpowell@thelearningpartnership.ca

Events of Interest

TDSB’s Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) Presents:

Return to Learn: Coming Back to School After a Concussion Information Session

Featuring: Dr. Neilank K. Jha, Neurosurgeon and Chairman, Konkussion Program, and Ruth Wilcock, Executive Director, Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA)

Date: **October 02, 2014** 6:30 pm at 5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom

Register by email to outreach@tdsb.on.ca **ONLY** if you require child minding!

For information visit: www.torontopiacc.com

The 6th Congress of Education: Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics

Saturday November 8, 2014, 9:00 am at Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, University of Toronto District School Board ,35 St. George Street, Toronto Ontario

For information visit the Spanish Speaking Network (SSEN) at: www.SSEN.ca

People For Education's 18th Annual Conference

Saturday, November 8, 2014, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

This year's Making Connections conference features keynote speaker Paul Tough, the author of How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character, as well as a range of panels and workshops covering financial literacy, education funding changes, entrepreneurship, community schools, sex ed, and more. Register <http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/events-workshops/come-to-our-conference/>

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

Embracing Family: Workshops for Parents and Caregivers of LGBTQ Youth

Workshops run all year and can be booked for different sites

For information contact: Embracingfamily@delislejuv.org

Coming soon! ... Schedule of workshops "All you Need to Know About Running an Effective School Council Session"

Dates to Remember

- **Humewood is turning 100 years - and need your help to celebrate** Contact them at Humewoodcentenary@gmail.com **Save the Date – Saturday, October 18, 2014!**

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>

Thanksgiving	October 13, 2014
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