



Weekly Update – March 1, 2015

Items of Interest

Ward Forum on March 3rd at Northern Secondary School from 7-9

Presentation and Hands-On Learning Opportunity – Social Media 101: A Twitter Primer

With the support of OPSBA, TDSB, Ward 11 Principals, Teachers, ECEs Parents and hopefully a few students! If you are not already on Twitter, come and learn how. After a presentation, we will organize breakout sessions with an assigned "expert" for each table to support interactive learning. For more details click on [Ward 11 Forum Notice March 3, 2015](#) – hoping for a great turnout.

And save the date for a Special Ward Forum on Capital Issues at the TDSB with Associate Director Carla Kisko. March 9th at Davisville Public School – details on the session attached.

There have been many articles written about surplus capacity in TDSB schools, and most recently, the Minister of Education called for the board to present a three-year capital plan that addresses surplus space. The situation in Ward 11, however, tells a different story 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. On March 9, come hear 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.

CTV News covers #fixourschools twitter campaign

Congratulations to Krista Wylie, Ward 7 parent, founder of the grassroots organization “Fix our Schools” for coverage this week on CTV. We need all the help we can get! From their website <http://fixourschools.ca/> “Frustrated with over \$3-billion of outstanding repairs and maintenance at TDSB schools, a group of parents whose children attend TDSB schools in Ward 7 got together for the first time in April, 2014. Over several months, we established our vision that every TDSB student should attend school in **safe, well-maintained buildings** and that public schools should be considered an **integral part of our public infrastructure** – on par with roads, transit and water. We have been lobbying the TDSB, the Provincial Government and the City of Toronto to **work together** to achieve this vision. We believe there is power in grassroots parent advocacy and **strength in numbers**. To that end, we invite you to [join the Fix Our Schools Campaign](#) to stay apprised of our efforts and find out how you can contribute. Please let others in your network know about Fix Our Schools and encourage them to become part of our email subscription list too! Thanks for getting involved to make a positive change in our children’s schools!”

Congratulations J.R. Wilcox CS

On February 11th, J.R. Wilcox CS was awarded a grant of \$5000 from the MusiCounts Band Aid Grant. Out of 250 applicants across the country, JR Wilcox was one of 69 to receive funding from this organization. As a result of the leadership of Mrs. Saskin, Head of the Music Department, along with the support of the school staff, student body and parent community the money will go towards supporting the Music program with much needed instruments and programming initiatives to enhance students’ learning and love of the Arts and Music. Bravo and well done! *(It is my pleasure to share good news in my weekly update... please share with me so I can share with others.)*



March is Greek Heritage Month!

March 2015 marks the first annual Greek Heritage Month in the TDSB, an opportunity to celebrate the experiences, contributions and achievements of Greek Canadians. All members of the TDSB community are invited to join in at the **First Annual TDSB Greek Heritage Festival: *Celebrating Culture: Classic to Contemporary***. This free event will take place from **11:00 am to 3:00 pm on Saturday, 28 March 2015, at East York CI (650 Coxwell Ave)**. The celebration includes music, dance, art, food, demonstrations, cultural displays, special presentations, and entertainment by TDSB elementary and secondary students as well as community members. Parking is free, and a light lunch will be served!

Revised Health & Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 1-12

Hundreds of thousands of Ontarians including the Ontario Public School Boards' Association welcomed the revised Health and Physical Education curriculum this last week after waiting over 4 years. In fact, according to the last Environics Research Group poll, 93% of parents supported the Curriculum.

[Ophea - Environics Data](#) – The following are the results of a survey of Ontario parents about sexual health education (as part of Ontario's Health and Physical Education curriculum), which was conducted by Environics Research Group on behalf of Ophea.

- Almost all Ontario parents (93%) are calling for an updated sexual health component to the health and physical education curriculum for elementary and secondary school students to replace the existing curriculum written 15 years ago.
- This reflects the strong overall support for sexual health education in Ontario schools, with the large majority of parents (87%) agreeing that this should be one component of overall health education. Only a very small proportion (2%) say this should not be taught in schools.
- 9 in 10 parents are comfortable with their child receiving information about sexual health from a school curriculum. This is second only to parents themselves (96%) and health professionals (96%) as parents' preferred source for their children's sexual health information.
- Parents are much less comfortable with the sexual health information available from other sources such as their children's peers (14%), TV and movies (13%), the Internet (13%) and social media (6%).
- The vast majority of Ontario parents think all 13 sexual health education topics presented on the survey should be addressed in schools. This is particularly true for self-esteem, sexually transmitted infections and communication and decision-making skills, but also includes: physical, cognitive, social and emotional changes; puberty; skills for healthy relationships; contraception methods; correct names for body parts including genitalia; abstinence and delaying sexual activity; reproduction; sexual orientation; and, media literacy about sexual content.
- These results are similar across the province and among population segments. School board (public vs. separate; English vs. French) is not a differentiator.

There are a number of articles trying to separate "Myth vs Fact". Please click on [Huffington Post Myths vs Facts](#). In addition, this link might also help. It's called "A Christian Parent's Guide to Ontario's New Sex Ed Curriculum" posted on February 24, 2015 by [Pastor Kevin](#) Click on the following link for the full text... <http://www.eganvillebaptist.org/follower/sex-ed>. It begins... There has been a firestorm in Ontario surrounding this new, updated "sex-ed" curriculum that is rolling out this coming September. Since our church is full of young kids and young families and because my own daughter is entering school in the fall, I thought it might be helpful to cut through some of the hype and misinformation flying around about what



teachers will be teaching, and when. So below I've listed some of the most common criticisms along with the accompanying relevant text from the [actual curriculum](#) found on the Ontario Ministry of Education's website. I should also include this caveat from the curriculum: The teacher prompts and student responses contained in this curriculum are provided to illustrate the intended learning – the concepts that students should understand and the skills they are to acquire – in connection with the particular expectation. The student responses are **not** intended to illustrate the voice of students or speech patterns, syntax, or word choice typical of students in the different grades.

To see it for yourself, please see the following links:

- [Ministry of Education website](#) which includes the full curriculum ([The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, 2015 \(revised\)](#) and [The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Health and Physical Education, 2015 \(revised\)](#)) as well as a number of resources developed specifically for parents:
- [A Parent's Guide to the Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 1 to 12](#)
- [A Parent's Guide: Human Development and Sexual health in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 1-6](#)
- [A Parent's Guide: Human Development and Sexual health in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Grades 7-12](#)
- [Quick Facts for Parents: Learning about Online Safety, Including Risks of Sexting](#)
- [Quick Facts for Parents: Learning about Healthy Relationships and Consent](#)

Professional development for all teachers delivering the new Health and Physical Education curriculum in September 2015 is being provided this Spring. Please check with your principal for additional information.

WAVE Louise Russo Youth Awards

Every year, the [WAVE Louise Russo Awards](#) are presented to outstanding students, schools and youth-led community groups who demonstrate Respect, Responsibility and Leadership through their concrete actions to help create safer, healthier communities. Students from ages 12 to 19 are invited apply for an opportunity to win one of the 5 Individual or Team Youth Awards (worth \$1,500 each) or 3 Leadership Awards of \$500. The Awards will be presented on April 29, 2015 at the WAVE Empowering Youth Day celebration. Deadline for application is Friday, March 6, 2015. Download the 2015 [Award Procedure](#) and [Application](#) forms.

Legislative Page Program – Apply before June 15

The Legislative Page Program is a chance for students to learn first-hand about how government works and how a bill becomes law. Pages work in the Chamber during House sittings, deliver documents to MPPs' offices and Assembly offices, meet with MPPs and other key parliamentary figures and receive lessons and tutoring. 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. Get an application form by submitting your full name, mailing address, phone number, grade, and academic standing: Call 1-416-325-7457 or write Rm 191, Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, ON, M7A 1A2 or e-mail: page_program@ontla.ola.org. **Deadline is June 15.**

Registration Now Open for 35th Annual Student Symposium

To mark this milestone year of educational programming, the Neuberger Holocaust Centre is proud to present our annual high school symposium at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) on **May 14 & 21**. An



integral component of the symposium will be interactive guided tours of of [Memory Unearthed: The Lodz Ghetto Photographs of Henryk Ross](#), conducted by specialized education officers at the AGO, and a keynote presentation from a survivor of the Lodz Ghetto. Subsequent workshops will allow students to further explore the theme of "Memories of the Ghettos: Then & Now." For information, click on [Additional Information & Registration](#). Click on the link for information about the middle school symposium on May 4. <http://www.holocaustcentre.com/Educators-Students/Middle-School-Symposium>.

Budget 2015-16

The TDSB's [Budget Committee](#) has been meeting regularly since December 2014 to discuss the upcoming budget for the 2015-16 school year. For more information, click on [Budget 2015-16 Ward Forum Presentation](#). Staff have been wrestling with potential options to balance next year's budget and has made a series of presentations to the Budget Committee. The current plan is to finalize our 2015-16 Operating Budget at our regular board meeting on **Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 7 p.m.**

EQAO Results – TDSB does not support comparing data

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. Should you wish to read more, click on "[A Parent's Guide to EQAO Tests](#)."

Every year, the [Fraser Institute](#) publishes a series of School Report Cards that rank the academic performance of elementary and secondary schools in Ontario, as well as other provinces. The rankings are based on the results of provincial standardized testing and are posted where users can compare schools. Today the Toronto Sun posted results. The Toronto Star completely ignores these rankings and the **TDSB does not support ranking of schools at all. In fact, we feel very strongly that EQAO results should not be the basis for comparisons among schools.** The results of one test administered at one point in the year hardly form the basis for comparisons of schools' overall quality. Moreover, test scores in and of themselves don't necessarily provide the whole picture of any student's or school's achievement. School rankings provide no information about why scores are high or low or about the circumstances that may affect achievement and ignores both the important story behind each school and its achievement result trends over time. A school might produce strong results although its students are not achieving their full potential. Another school, on the other hand, might not perform as well as others, based on the numbers alone, but may demonstrate substantial progress when measured over time and against specific targets. Comparisons often ignore the particular circumstances affecting individual schools' achievement. The real goal of EQAO is intended to ensure the quality and accountability of the public education system and serve as a basis for improvements in student learning.

Results on the provincial tests do not count toward students' grades. They provide additional information that should be considered alongside report card grades to help you assess and support your child's learning. They are not put into a student's Ontario School Record (OSR). Parents received the original results. Entrance for public funded high schools, colleges or universities do not use EQAO results, however, students must successfully complete the Grade 10 Literacy (OSSLT) test to graduate. Schools study aggregate data and analyze trends for school improvement. School Improvement Plans Use EQAO data,



demographic data, student and parent census data, informal assessment data and District Review recommendations to identify specific areas requiring improvement and then programs and resources required to achieve student success are put into place.

Each year, the TDSB examines board-wide and school-by-school EQAO and OSSLT results to determine gaps and areas that need improvement. While TDSB EQAO and OSSLT results have improved steadily over time, the results also show that some learners continue to struggle in mathematics. This is a trend that can be seen across the province and last fall, the TDSB introduced the Kindergarten to Grade 12 Mathematics Strategy, a key priority of the Years of Action, to support student achievement in mathematics. Click on <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/HighSchool/YourSchoolDay/Curriculum/Mathematics.aspx> for more information.

Empowering Families through Knowledge and Networking

Special Education Conference – Saturday, March 28, 2015 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Earl Haig Secondary School (100 Princess Avenue) Register at www.tdsb.on.ca/parentconference

The Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) and Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) are collaborating with the TDSB in delivering a conference for parents/guardians on Special Education topics. Learn about Individual Education Plans (IEPs) – the Identification Placement and Review Committee process (IPRC) – transition planning for elementary, secondary and post-secondary environments – use of technology – psycho-educational assessment – advocacy and more... Connect with agencies and personnel specializing in the support of children with special needs/gifts and their families. Connect with other parents of children with similar special needs/gifts, the specific agencies that support them and with TDSB staff in discussion sessions. Learn about specific resources and opportunities. Share challenges, problem solving strategies and success stories.

City of Toronto Recreation Programming (from Councillor Matlow's Newsletter)

Registration for spring and summer City of Toronto community recreation programs, including summer camps, begins at **7 am on March 11** for the Toronto and East York districts. Older Adults (60+ years) who register for adult programs receive a 50% discount. Please call 416-338-4386 or speak with staff at a City community centre for more information on how to register. To explore recreation program options, visit [the City of Toronto Website](http://www.toronto.ca) or pick up a FUN Guide at City Hall, civic centres, community centres and libraries. Many community centres offer free recreation programs, including leisure swimming and skating, and drop-in programs for children, youth and older adults. More information about free and low-cost programming options is available [here](#).

Worth Repeating

▪ TDSB Excellence Awards (from the TDSB website)

Every day, exceptional work is happening across the TDSB. The Excellence Awards give parents, staff, students and the community the opportunity to reward individuals and groups who are going above and beyond to support students across the system. You will need to complete the online nomination form, available at www.tdsb.on.ca/excellence. **The deadline for applications is Friday, 20 March 2015 at 4 p.m. Let's honour the excellence of staff in our Ward!**



- **St Paul's Summit on Women's Equality – Sunday, March 8 from 2-4pm**
Skills for Change 791 St. Clair Avenue West (at Greensides Ave)
March 8th is International Women's Day. Join representatives from all three levels of government to talk about women's equality in Canada today. Panelists: The Hon. Carolyn Bennett, MD, MP; Dr. Eric Hoskins, MPP; Josh Colle, City Councillor, Ward 15; Josh Matlow, City Councillor, Ward 22; Joe Mihevc, City Councillor, Ward 21; Shelley Laskin, TDSB School Trustee; and Jo-Ann Davis, TCDSB School Trustee.
- **E-Learning** Registration opens on March 23rd at 7:30am
<http://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/elearning/e-summerschool.aspx>
- **Focus On Youth Toronto - Summer 2015**
To apply, interested students should complete the on-line application at www.tdsb.on.ca/focusonyouth. The application deadline for students is March 22, 2015.
- **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:
 - Kids Have Stress Too! March 26, 6:00PM, The Psychology Foundation of Canada Presented by Toronto Public Health, Register: <http://goo.gl/forms/7XNOZkELLy>
 - 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

- **March 3 – Social Media and a Hands-On Tutorial on Twitter! – Northern SS at 7pm**
- **March 9 – Special Ward Forum on Capital Issues – Davisville Jr PS at 7pm**
- **May 21 – Topic TBC**

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>

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](#)

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