



Weekly Update – March 8, 2015

Items of Interest

Special Ward Forum on Capital Issues at the TDSB with Associate Director Carla Kisko. March 9th Davisville Public School from 7-9– 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.

Despite the weather last Tuesday, we had a great Ward Forum on Twitter... our invited experts spoke to how they use Twitter to connect directly with students and their parents/guardians; with other staff as a professional development tool and to connect directly with community members to share photos, videos, board news, links to relevant information, promote public education & get feedback. You can view the presentation by clicking the link on my website [Twitter 101 for Ward 11 Forum](#).

Budget 2015-16 (from TDSB Website)

Working together, Trustees and staff have developed a [responsible plan](#) to address the \$16.5M projected deficit with minimal impacts on students and the classroom, despite ongoing provincial funding cuts. The plan includes a list of proposed cost savings and revenue generating activities. (Please note it does not include any cuts to Reading Recovery – trustees did not accept that option). The proposed budget plan for 2015-2016 will be voted at this week's Regular Meeting on March 11th. For more details click on [Budget 2015-16 Fact Sheet](#). In the coming weeks, the Ministry of Education will release next year's Grants for Student Needs (GSNs), which are the grants provided to fund school boards. Should additional cuts from the Province be announced this year, the TDSB will make every possible effort to ensure these provincial cuts have a minimal impact on students and the classroom. If significant decreases to grants are announced, the Board may need to revisit its balanced budget plan. **Please note** – even though we are balancing our operating budget, significant gaps exist between our student needs and provincial funding. For detailed information, please see [Financial Facts 2015](#). We now turn our full attention to our Capital Budget – hear more at Monday's Ward Forum.

Pi Day – March 14th (03/14/15)

Pi Day is the unofficial holiday that celebrates the mathematical constant pi (π) on March 14 in the month/day date format because the digits in this date correspond with the first three digits of π (3.14). This year, Pi Day is going to be bigger than ever! Although pi has been calculated to over one trillion digits beyond its decimal point, this 14 March 2015 (3/14/15) brings us to 4 digits beyond the decimal point 3.1415. While only a handful of digits are needed for typical calculations, pi's infinite nature makes it a fun challenge to memorize, and to computationally calculate more and more digits.



Parents Reaching Out Grants (PRO) – Apply Today!

The province's PRO grants for school councils are intended to support school-based initiatives to reach parents who face barriers that prevent them from becoming involved in their children's learning at home and at school. School councils may develop proposals individually, with other school councils in the same board, or with other groups in the school or in the community. **Grants are available to school councils for a maximum of \$1,000 for school-based initiatives. Application due date is May 19, 2015 at 12:00 midnight.** All applications submitted by school councils, must be approved by a motion by the school council. Please note that applicants should obtain the login and password several days prior to the due date as there will be insufficient time on the due date to obtain and complete the application. For project ideas, refer to the Ministry website <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/reaching.html> and go to the bottom of the page to click on the links for school council and regional/provincial grants.

Arts Access Fund – Opportunity for Subsidized Arts Programming

The Arts Access Fund (www.artsaccessfund.org) gives scholarships to children and youth (ages 6-19 years) who want to study the arts. Scholarships are award based on interest and financial need. Families pay \$20 for a class that costs at least \$300 and they are renewed each term, and each year, so long as their attendance is good. It's a wonderful opportunity for children and their parents who are always thrilled by what the kids produce and by the positive impact of the experience. Students can choose from the following well-respected schools:

- Avenue Road Arts School
- Artists' Play Dance
- Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre
- Midtown School of Music
- School of Toronto Dance Theatre
- Toronto Children's Chorus
- Toronto School for Strings and Piano

**If you or your child are between the ages of 6 to 19 years,
visit www.artsaccessfund.org.
for more information or to apply for an arts scholarship.
Want to speak with someone about this amazing opportunity?
Call 416-961-1502, ext. 303.**

Central Tech mediation resolution agreed to by all parties (Media Release)

TORONTO – After weeks of mediation at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), a new field and sports facility agreement for Central Technical School has been settled on, with all parties agreeing to a solution that meets the needs of Central Tech students and families, the TDSB, and the surrounding communities. Parties at the mediation included the TDSB, Razor Management Inc., the City of Toronto, the Harbord Village Residents' Association (HVRA), the Palmerston Area Residents' Association (PARA), The Friends and Neighbours of Central Tech (FANCTS), and Ceta Ramkhalawansingh. All seven parties agreed to the mediated settlement. "From the start, we have focused on the needs of our students at Central Tech," said

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Shaun Chen, Chair of the Toronto District School Board. “Central Tech has an incredible history of excellence in academics and athletics, and it is a tradition we hope to continue. Our students deserve a proper field, which is what this agreement will deliver.” In 2012, the TDSB entered into talks with Razor Management Inc. to redevelop the Central Tech field as part of the TDSB’s Championship Field program that aims to improve access to athletic facilities and enhance opportunities for students across the city. There was wide community agreement about the need to rehabilitate the field at Central Tech, and some support for the original proposal from local residents. However, local politicians, City staff and other area residents were concerned about certain aspects of the original plan...The mediation process addressed all elements of the proposal, including the new turf field, winter dome, traffic and parking concerns, and community access...The settlement still requires approval by the OMB, which the parties will be seeking on March 23, 2015.

Healthy Futures: The 2014 Toronto Public Health Student Survey

Toronto Public Health released the findings of the [Healthy Futures](#) survey. This voluntary survey was administered between January-March 2014 by Toronto Public Health. Approximately 3.8% of all Grade 7-12 Toronto District School Board students, based on October 31, 2014 enrolment, took part in the survey. Along with information from [TDSB’s own census](#), this information will be used to inform strategies and programming for students across the system. From the BOH Report “This is the first time TPH has collected comprehensive data on Toronto’s adolescent school population. Many of the findings in this report point to strategies that build mental health and resiliency, as part of a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to youth health. Effective interventions focus on the development of healthy relationships and social support at the family, school, and community level. The need is evident for an urban environment that promotes physical activity, provides healthy food options, and gives youth choices that enable them to avoid substance use. Increasing the landscape of youth health is a shared responsibility for many stakeholders including families, government, schools, communities, and youth. Youth engagement and peer leadership are cornerstones of the healthy student community.” For more details, see the **survey findings**.

EcoSchool Newsletter for March is out!

Attention EcoTeams! The deadline for all schools to complete and submit your certification application online is Wednesday, April 15th, 2015. If you haven't already begun, please start working on the online application now so you are able to answer all of the questions in time. Please note that if you do not meet this deadline your school will not be audited this school year. Check out our March Newsletter for information on World Water Day, Earth Hour, AQ course, Bike Week and more [EcoSchools March 2015](#)

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
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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](#) 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!**

▪ **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.

▪ **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/7XNOZkELLv>
- 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 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/SRsxJzPYgI> + 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