



Weekly Update – January 18, 2015

Items of Interest

Wilson Report

On Wednesday, Margaret Wilson's Report to the Minister of Education was shared publicly.

<http://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2015/01/province-directs-tdsb-to-change-board-policy-practice-and-governance-structure.doc>. Although there were surprises for me in the Minister's Directives, there were none in the Wilson Report itself. In fact, the Wilson Report validated the concerns I shared with others regard to governance and leadership that were expressed by former Chair Mari Rutka to the Minister.

It's been painful to read the Report in its entirety. Although I am no stranger to the dysfunction in the board room and I have experienced intimidation by fellow Trustees myself, I really have tried to ensure that the issues of governance did not reach down to the school level. Our role as Trustees is to question in order to ensure our policies and procedures are interpreted appropriately but it is not to threaten or intimidate. The vast majority of Trustees in the TDSB, both past and present, act in good faith to support student achievement and well-being. However, the Wilson Report reminds us all that we are obligated to see beyond our own constituencies and remember our obligation to the greater public trust. From OPSBA's website

A trustee's role is to maintain a focus on student achievement and well-being and to participate in making decisions that benefit the entire board district while representing the interests of his or her constituents. Trustees must also communicate the views and decisions of the board back to their constituents.

The Wilson Report and the Ministry Directives will not fundamentally change the way I fulfill my role and responsibilities as a Trustee, save for the loss of my office at the Board and my Constituency Assistant, Jeanette Hughes. Jeanette has been an invaluable support not only to me, but also to the community and for that, I am very sad and will miss her support very much.

I truly believe the TDSB will emerge from this stronger and more transparent.

Above all else, I will continue to keep my focus on the same goal that has always driven my actions – what is best for students, staff and schools.

In light of the Wilson Report, there may be some questions and I invite you to come to the Ward Forum on Thursday to have a discussion, to e-mail me or to call me.

Ward Forum – January 22, 2014 at Davisville Jr Public School from 6:30-8:30

Special Presentation – Balancing the 2015-16 Budget –

Carla Kisko, Associate Deputy Director of Finance and Operation @7:30

Although past years of difficult decisions has made balancing the budget easier in recent years, the Board continues to experience declining enrolment in secondary schools which results in a loss of grants – many of which already do not meet Toronto students' needs. On January 22nd, TDSB staff will share information about the 2015-16 Budget. In addition, the presentation will touch on our budget for Capital as well – as many of you know, this Ward does not have under-utilized schools – quite the contrary. The ministry directive re addressing our under-enrolled schools should ultimately help those areas with over-utilization.

Twitter: @shelleylaskin

Webpage: www.tdsb.on.ca/Laskin



Parent and Community Engagement Office Workshops

Throughout the winter and spring the Parent and Community Engagement Office and Community Use of Schools will be delivering a series of workshops on “**Running an Effective School Council and Secondary Transitions**”. For workshop dates and locations visit:

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/HowtoGetInvolved/SchoolCouncils/Workshops.aspx>.

School Council Appreciation & Information Evening – February 26, 6pm

Please join us in celebrating the work and contribution of school councils/parents to the education system. The evening will provide council chair/parent representatives with the opportunity to:

- Network with other School Councils
- Participate in roundtable School Council talk sessions; and
- enjoy a wonderful dinner.

Event Details: **Montecassino Hotel**, 3710 Chesswood Drive, Toronto, ON M3J 2W4

Shuttle bus is available from Downsview Subway Station, every 20 minutes from 5:30 pm until 7:30 pm.

Registration is limited to 2 parent/school council representatives per school.

Registration will be closed on Friday, February 13, 2015.

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/HowtoGetInvolved/Conferences.aspx>

Volunteer dancers wanted for Pan Am opening ceremony (insidetoronto.com January 16)

Calling all dancers, Cirque de Soleil will be hosting auditions February 7 and 8 for volunteer performers for this summer's 2015 Pan Am Games opening ceremony. The performance company is looking to cast 115 boys and girls ages 12 and up Saturday, Feb 7 and 50 male and female hip-hop dancers ages 19 and up Saturday, Feb 8. Cirque du Soleil is the official creative partner for the opening ceremony of the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am Games. It will combine its special blend of stagecraft, acrobatic athleticism and colourful cultural pageantry to create this original one-night only production. To register visit

http://cirk.me/PANAM_CHILDREN

The OTIP Teaching Awards

Want to recognize a teacher who does great work in the school? Ontario has a publicly funded education system which is recognized for its excellence around the world. This excellence is, in large part, due to the teachers who light sparks in students, inspire their colleagues and hearten parents. The OTIP Teaching Awards recognize these teachers. Anyone can nominate a teacher in Ontario's publicly funded schools, including public, Catholic, and francophone school boards. You can nominate a teacher in one of three categories: elementary, secondary, or a beginning teacher in the first five years of teaching. Winning teachers are hosted at a fall awards ceremony in Toronto where they are presented with a personal award of \$1,000 and a Certificate of Recognition. Their schools are recognized as well with a \$1,000 prize and a Certificate of Recognition. Deadline for submitting nominations is March 31, 2015. <http://en.teachingawards.ca/>

Resources from “Tweets” you may find interesting

@Usih_TDSB: Share this with #TDSB students - Frequently Asked Questions: Scholarship Applications - <http://t.co/fqxLpaG00A>! <http://t.co/HcVLIInZDT8>

@ONTSpecialNeeds: #Ontario #Educators Take Note: Traditional Learners vs. 21st Century Learners <http://pic.twitter.com/ZewScKrhGl>



@Ms_Paradis Check out Google's #CSFirst club: an inspiring + free way for students to learn code. cs-first.com @orioleparkjps @MckibbinChris

@dylan_reid: How to Criticize with Kindness: Philosopher Daniel Dennett on the 4 Steps to Arguing Intelligently <http://t.co/zkaHGnGfZc> via @brainpicker

@StuartShanker: Incredibly important paper by Darcia Narvaez: Self-Control: (a) Innate, or (b) Dependent on Mom & Dad? Psych. Today <http://t.co/fIUgnuLMP>

Key Dates Worth Repeating

Optional Attendance Application for Secondary School Program

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/Policies,ProceduresForms/Detail.aspx?docId=177>

Applications must be received by Friday, 30 January 2015.

Optional Attendance Application for Elementary School Program

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/Policies,ProceduresForms/Detail.aspx?docId=177>

Applications must be received by Friday, 13 February 2015.

Spectrum Alternative School Open House 2015

Wednesday, January 28th, 2015 – 3 sessions: 6:00, 6:45 and 7:30 at Davisville Public School/ Spectrum Alternative School. Applications will be available online after the open house. Visit our school website for more information: <http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/spectrum>

Parent Seminars on Children's Mental Health Topics

Three upcoming parent seminars on children's mental health topics being offered in Toronto by the Hincks-Dellcrest Centre (at the Young People's Theatre) on January 29th, February 11th and March 25th. For more information, click on <http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/Home/Our-Institute/ParentSeminarSeries.aspx>

Grade 4 and Grade 7 Extended French Programs

The extended application process opens – January 5, 2015 and closes – January 29, 2015. Note: Registration is for entry in September 2015. Information night and information is posted on the TDSB French Programs [page](#).

2014-15 Premier's Awards for Accepting Schools Nominations are now open!

Download a [nomination form](#) and start your submission today. Deadline: February 20, 2015 by 5 p.m. EST

2015-2016 Minister's Student Advisory Council Applications are open for students in grades 7-12.

Deadline is February 28, 2015 by 5 p.m. EST

Hold the Dates for Future Ward Forums

- March 3 – Social Media and a Hands-On Tutorial on Twitter!
- 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>

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