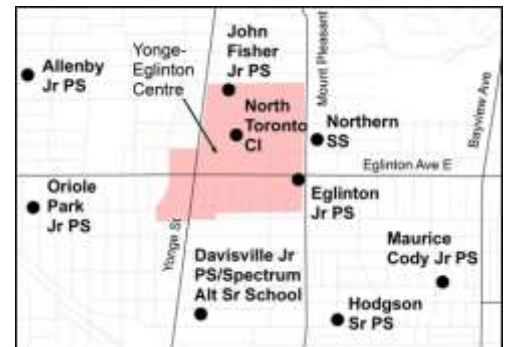


Changes to Ontario Government’s Education Development Charges (EDCs) Legislation Would Allow the TDSB to Respond to Overcrowded Schools

Every day, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) welcomes more than 246,000 students to 584 schools across the City of Toronto. It also serves approximately 160,000 life-long learners in its Adult and Continuing Education programs.

Yonge-Eglinton Intensification

The Yonge-Eglinton area is located at the crossroads of Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue in midtown Toronto. The area roughly bounded by Yonge Street to the west, Mount Pleasant Road to the east, Keewatin Avenue to the North and Soudan Avenue to the south, is one of four ‘urban centres’ across the city where intensification is encouraged by the City of Toronto. The ‘urban centre’ is situated in large part within the attendance area of Eglinton Jr. PS.



This Yonge-Eglinton area has experienced significant high-density residential development over the past decade, which has resulted in substantial pressure on critical public infrastructure serving the area such as local schools, public transit and roads. Within the attendance area of Eglinton Jr. PS alone, approximately 3,900 new residential units have been built since 2004, generating nearly 275 additional students from Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 12.

Impact on Schools

Lack of sufficient space in local schools has forced the TDSB to adopt different accommodation strategies for managing enrolment growth, including the redirection of students residing in new residential development to schools out of the community, the use of portables and changes to programs, grade ranges and school boundaries. Most recently, the TDSB approved changes to the grades of local elementary schools whereby Grade 6 students from Eglinton Jr. PS, Davisville Jr. PS, Maurice Cody Jr. PS and Oriole Park Jr. PS will be moved into Hodgson Sr. PS to manage enrolment growth.

In October 2015, the TDSB received approval from the Ministry of Education to build a new 731 pupil place JK to Grade 6 elementary school that will replace the existing Davisville Jr. Public School and Spectrum Alt. Sr. School building. In October 2016 the TDSB received approval from the Ministry of Education to build a new 12-classroom addition at Hodgson Sr. PS to accommodate the Grade 6 students from surrounding schools. Despite the changes to programs, boundaries, grades and the additional space provided by two upcoming capital projects, recent enrolment projections suggest that local schools, particularly Eglinton Jr. PS, are likely to become over utilized again. The TDSB will be engaging in another comprehensive accommodation study in the area in 2017-18 that will explore ways to manage continued enrolment pressures.

Elementary school sites in this heavily urbanized area are small and constrained, which restricts the board’s ability to add portables and/or future expansions to accommodate growth. For example, Eglinton Jr. PS is a junior elementary school with over 560 students that is situated on a 1.6 acre school site. By comparison, the average size of a junior elementary school site in Toronto is 4.8 acres.

Schools in the Area

The following table illustrates the current and projected enrolment for elementary schools located in and around the Yonge-Eglinton Centre.

| School Name | Number of Students Oct 2016 | Building Capacity 2016 (Pupil Places) | Building Utilization Rate 2016 (Students ÷ Capacity) | Number of Portables 2016 | Projected Number of Students Oct 2026 ¹ |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Allenby Jr. PS | 818 | 776 | 105% | 0 | 788 |
| Davisville Jr. PS / Spectrum Alt. | 620 | 538 | 115% | 0 | 726 |
| Eglinton Jr. PS | 567 | 507 | 112% | 0 | 658 |
| John Fisher Jr. PS | 490 | 521 | 94% | 0 | 447 |
| Maurice Cody Jr. PS | 668 | 686 | 97% | 0 | 575 |
| Oriole Park Jr. PS | 307 | 242 | 127% | 2 | 247 |
| Hodgson Sr. PS | 336 | 367 | 92% | 0 | 817 |

¹ Projections are revised each school year based on the most recent enrolment trends, demographic data, residential development information, and Board-approved accommodation changes. These projections were created in the 2016-17 school year for the period 2017 to 2026.

² The new Davsivlle Jr. PS / Spectrum Alt. Sr. PS will accommodate 731 pupils and is anticipated to be completed in 2020.

³ The new Hodgson Sr. PS addition will accommodate 276 additional students and is anticipated to be completed in 2020.

Education Development Charges (EDCs)

Education Development Charges (EDCs) provide school boards with the ability to charge a levy on new developments, which can be used to purchase land for future school sites. These funds also support the cost of site preparation, such as grading and fencing.

The Minister of Education must approve school boards’ EDC by-laws. In order to qualify for an EDC, a school board must show that the number of students that it needs to accommodate is larger than the space available across the board.

The TDSB does not meet this condition because there is surplus space across the city, which puts the TDSB at a disadvantage.

In addition, current legislation mandates that EDCs can only be used for the purchase of land to support schools in growth areas, not to support the cost of building new schools or expanding existing schools.

Current Educational Development Charges for Nearby School Boards

| Region | School Board | Residential Charges / Unit | Non-residential Charges/Sq Ft |
|---------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Durham Region | Durham Catholic DSB | \$541.00 | \$0.0 |
| | Durham DSB | \$1,423.00 | \$0.0 |
| Halton Region | Halton Catholic DSB | \$1,484.00 | \$0.38 |
| | Halton DSB | \$2,691.00 | \$0.69 |
| Hamilton | Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB | \$739.00 | \$0.22 |
| Peel | Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB | \$551.00 | \$0.33 |
| | Peel DSB | \$1,595.00 | \$0.32 |
| Simcoe County | Simcoe County DSB | \$1,364.00 | \$0.36 |
| | Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB | \$463.00 | \$0.12 |
| Toronto | Toronto Catholic DSB | \$1,303.00 | \$0.94 |
| | Toronto DSB | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| York Region | York Catholic DSB | \$650.00 | \$0.17 |
| | York DSB | \$1,370.00 | \$0.35 |

Based on the current Toronto Catholic District School Board’s EDC rate and the total number of units under construction, proposed or planned across the city, the TDSB could generate revenue of approximately \$300 million to help support urgent school infrastructure needs.

What can be done?

Numbers show that there are more students than spots available at local schools, which creates an overcrowding situation. Looking forward, developers have made applications to the City of Toronto to build up to 13,350 additional units in the Yonge-Eglinton area, which could generate approximately 595 additional students from JK to Grade 12.

The TDSB is circulated on all development applications and is provided an opportunity to provide comments. Although the TDSB advises the City of Toronto that no space is available in local schools to accommodate future students, this does not weigh heavily on the City or the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) when considering whether or not to approve new development.

While other school boards are entitled to EDCs to address their growth related needs, the TDSB does not have this ability despite undergoing massive residential intensification and population growth in many areas.

The TDSB is not treated equally. There is a solution.

The Ontario government should amend existing EDC regulations to provide greater flexibility as to their use (i.e. school expansions, new schools and repairs rather than just land costs), and allow the TDSB to access EDC revenue. This would substantially increase the TDSB’s ability to make adequate investments in schools as development continues in the Yonge-Eglinton area and across the city.