

September 7, 2014

Items of Interest from Trustee Shelley Laskin, Ward 11

Website click on [Trustee Shelley Laskin](#)

[www.tdsb.on.ca/laskin](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/laskin)

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### **Back to School System Message from Donna Quan, Director of Education and Associate Directors Gen Ling Chang, Carla Kisko & Lou Vavougios**

Back to school is an exciting time for students, parents/guardians and staff across Toronto. There is no better time to start fresh than September—a time that always brings renewed focus and energy. It was a busy summer break as we updated school spaces to make them ready for the arrival of more than 406 000 outstanding and diverse students and lifelong learners. Part of this included readying over 128 sites to welcome 36 000 full day [kindergarten](#) students. We would like to thank Facility Services staff for this significant effort and to thank the many school staff who also dedicated their own time to make our schools shine for everyone's first day back. This July, we also received the great news that last year we had the highest number of Ontario Scholars in the history of the TDSB. We are proud of our students and their achievement. It is staff like you who provide our students with every opportunity to succeed. Thank you for making every student a priority, every day. This year we will continue to work towards achieving the priorities set out in the second phase of the [Years of Action](#) plan. Coming this fall, we will be rolling out the [Math Strategy](#) which includes mathematics coaching and supports. There will also be professional development sessions offered to support the **STEM** strategy for all school staff and central leaders. More on STEM will be shared soon! The beginning of a new school year also marks the beginning of **Caring and Safe Schools Weeks (8 - 19 September 2014)**. Over these two weeks, schools, communities and the Board will promote and celebrate how we work together to create positive school climates through a number of initiatives. More information about Caring and Safe Schools Weeks can be found on our internal website. As a recognized leader of cutting-edge and progressive learning, **this October the TDSB will celebrate Skills Trades Month** highlighting skilled trades pathways for students. Events will take place throughout the system including the Skilled Trades and Technology Summit where students will have an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge with industry, college and training partners... We wish you all the best for an exciting and inspirational school year ahead and look forward to the progress and goals we will achieve together.

### **EQAO**

On August 27, EQAO released their provincial numbers with the following headline "EQAO Provincial Assessments: Literacy success rates are high in Ontario elementary schools; math achievement drops again in Grade 6 and shows steady improvement in the Grade 9 applied course." The board responded by putting a link to Mathematics "We can Help" on the home page of the website. To help further focus our supports and efforts in the classroom, we recently launched "Improving Success in Mathematics", a [math strategy designed for educators](#), with **a goal of improving student achievement in math**. For more details, please click on <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/HighSchool/YourSchoolDay/Curriculum/Mathematics.aspx>. Please note on September 17, EQAO will release individual reports for each elementary school and its board, as well as a full provincial report on the elementary school assessments on Primary and Junior Assessments (Reading, Writing, Mathematics). On September 24, school and board reports will be released for the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics as well as for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

### **OPSBA's Collective Bargaining Update**

When Bill 122, the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, 2014* became law, a process for two-tiered bargaining for collective agreements between school boards and their employees was established. The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) is the bargaining agent for our board. The following information represents the most recent developments as of September 3, 2014. As always the content of negotiations discussions are confidential, however OPSBA has said the information below can be shared with constituent groups.

- OPSBA had preliminary meetings with OSSTF on August 13 and with ETFO on September 3, and future dates have been scheduled for both groups in September. Support Staff bargaining is also due to commence in the following weeks.
- The negotiations are focused on determining what issues will be negotiated at the central table. At the conclusion of these discussions, and prior to local bargaining, detailed information will be provided to Boards to inform the local bargaining process. Local bargaining cannot begin, under the Act until the central table issues have been determined.

I will continue to update non-confidential information as it becomes available.

### **Other Information from OPSBA that you may find interesting**

“The past couple of weeks have been busy with several Ministry of Education memos and announcements as well as other – child/family related news. Please find below a summary of these.”

- September 4 [news release](#) re: funding for classroom technology supports. School boards to be notified about specific funding amounts for this school year.
- September 3 [news release](#) re: Ontario’s new Poverty Reduction Strategy. Highlights include increasing the Ontario Child Benefit, provision of health benefits to children and youth in low-income families.
- September 3 [news release](#) re: expansion of the Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM) program.
- August 27 [new release](#) re: Grade 3 and 6 EQAO results.
- August 27 [news release](#) re: funding to reduce wait times and rehabilitation services for child and youth with special needs and their families.

### **Promoting Healthy Living and an Active Lifestyle**

I am very proud of being quoted in the Catapult Schools Bulletin “Promoting Healthy Living and an Active Lifestyle” <http://www.catapultschools.ca/Educator-Issues/Promoting-Healthy-Living-and-an-Active-Lifestyle>. I am sharing it with you FYI.

“Health starts with having a good understanding of what they come to school with. Health is mental and physical...that preparedness to learn. Have they had enough sleep? Have we given them too much homework which stresses them out? And now it can be actual physical considerations like obesity. We have to value the physical health attributes as much as the academic achievement attributes because one contributes to the other. It went from not even including it to now at least saying the words...” “Student Achievement and Wellbeing” Now we have to demonstrate that we actually care about a student’s physical and emotional well being and not just their academic scores. There needs to be opportunities to decompress and have some downtime to sit quietly or run around and scream and yell. Provide all types of the environments and activities they need for all those different parts of their brain and physical needs have to be a part of their entire day - not just 20 minutes of mandated physical activity. That is why we need to move away from coming in and sitting at your desk for 60 minutes then a 15 minute break, then sit quiet through lunch. We do it in kindergarten so why do we stop it in grade 1? They move from the water table to the sand table to the doll house and you encourage that but then we stop all of that and say “ok now its time to learn so you have to sit in one place”. No you don’t!” – Shelley Laskin

### **School Council Information**

Just a friendly reminder that School Council information can be found on my website... it includes information on elections, school council basics, etc.

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward11/Ward11/SchoolCouncilInformation.aspx>

Good luck with setting up for the coming year. Your volunteer efforts in support of the students in your schools is invaluable... thank you for all that you do.

### **Eglinton Crosstown Information –Pedestrian Safety near School Areas and Construction Sites**

“The Eglinton Crosstown is a 19-kilometre light rail transit (LRT) line that will run along Eglinton Avenue through the heart of Toronto, with an underground central section. The line will connect Mount Dennis in the west to Kennedy Road in the east, and the new service will be up to 60% faster than the bus service

today. The construction of the Eglinton Crosstown at some of the major intersections along Eglinton Avenue is in full swing. For the safety of pedestrians near the construction areas..." please see attached.

### **Broadening the Definition of School Success (People for Education)**

- If a school has good scores on province-wide literacy and numeracy tests, can we assume they are doing a good job overall?
- Should schools be responsible for supporting student success in areas such as health, creativity, citizenship, and social-emotional skills?

These questions and more are part of a public poll launched today by People for Education. The poll is part of a ground-breaking initiative to broaden how success is measured in education. People for Education's [Measuring What Matters](#) project will include multiple partners, extensive public consultations, pilot programs in Ontario schools and ongoing research by a group of expert scholars.

The success of our students affects everyone – they represent the future of Canada and the kind of society we hope to have. Whether you are a student, a parent, a teacher, an employer, or an interested citizen, [we need to hear from you](#).

[Take the poll](#)

### **Resources from “Tweets” you may find interesting**

@davidsornberger: Are you new to Twitter? Here are 7 effective ways to engage on Twitter #edtech #edchat #edtechchat <http://t.co/FIBtGRHy33>

@edutopia: Good tips. MT @metrokidsmag: Volunteering at your child’s school not only benefits students, but also you: <http://t.co/QCJUpQ5Tz4>

@opheacanada: Our Road Safety Resource has lessons & support material for students K-12! Check it out and keep your students #safe! <http://t.co/DrymTu63K4>

@MsNextEd: Parent Engagement Rises as Schools Communicate with Tech Tools: <http://t.co/peZrK04AOQ> via @centerdigitaled @awelcome #edtech #ptchat

@EvergreenCanada: Walk to school a childhood tradition we love & so does @Jen\_Keesmaat <http://t.co/PibzxaKNhv> #walktoschool #placemaking #children

### **In the News**

[Toronto District School Board wants to charge developers](#)

Toronto Star (September 4)

Summary: The Toronto District School Board is calling on the province to allow it to collect fees from developers to help it pay for renovations, maintenance and school construction. Trustees say the 7,000 condos recently given the go-ahead by city council will alone bring in almost \$6 million for the Toronto Catholic board, which is allowed to levy “education development charges.” They estimate that in total, the Catholic board will receive almost \$50 million, given the current number of building permits issued — and the public board gets nothing, said Trustee Chris Glover.

Note- for more information on EDCs, please click on [Education Development Charges Backgrounder](#)

### **Dates to Remember**

- **Humewood is turning 100 years - and need your help to celebrate** Contact them at [Humewoodcentenary@gmail.com](mailto: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/SRsjzPYgL>  
+ 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

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/AboutUs/docs/Days%20of%20Significance%202014-15%20V6.pdf>

**If you no longer wish to receive these weekly e-mails, please let me know at [shelley.laskin@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:shelley.laskin@tdsb.on.ca)**