

# WARD 9 FORUM

Tuesday November 12, 2019, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm  
Carleton Village Jr & Sr Sports and Wellness Academy  
315 Osler St, Toronto, ON

## WELCOME:

- Principal Lorelei Eccleston at [Carleton Village Jr & Sr Sports and Wellness Academy](#) opened the meeting by welcoming all the parents and others who attended.
  - She addressed a concept that they practise at this school called Fit Fridays
    - Learn about topics for 4 consecutive Fridays
    - Learn Physical Education skills
    - Learn more about teaching kids to eat healthy (vegetables)
    - 5 S's: Speed, strength, stability, stamina
    - Mindful colouring units, different physical instruments (treadmill)
    - Fit Friday is about wellbeing (sleep is included)
  - Students learn swimming at this school as they have a swimming pool (by grade 3 they are deep enders)
  - They do mindful announcements every day

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

- Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) Update
  - D Williams (Ward 9 rep/co-chair of parent council): parent conference this Saturday (November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019), free, multiple workshops, childcare, see newsletter for link to register
  - Looking for a Ward 9 alternate for PIAC (elections at the January Ward Form)
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Update
  - Meet monthly
  - Updates: a lot of work around exclusions (suspensions) + how it affects disabled students and modified days
  - Ontario human rights commissions is working on reading disabilities and reading with kids
  - Only open in October, it is not a survey, they reach out to parents directly
  - Next SEAC meeting is December 2nd, anyone can sit in, email trustee for information
  - At the last SEAC meeting there was talk about conscious classrooms to bring a mindful program to work with parents, teachers and students, to help students with special needs to learn more effectively in classrooms and be calm
  - Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) (compilation of all schools) is being made open shortly - tells you about IEPs, Suspensions, etc.

- Conscious classrooms: sometimes it can be a struggle with students who have a diagnosis, there is disruptive behaviour. Parents and teachers struggle to deal with this. It should be talked about and efforts should be made to raise awareness. Some are helped and some may not be. Conscious classroom / mindfulness is something to strive towards to be put into every school.
- They have started this program in 8 schools to try, to see if kids are being helped
- The board has a list who want to be approved this program

## TRUSTEE UPDATE

- Last Tuesday was the first Ward 9 Equity Committee meeting. About 15-16 parents came out to brainstorm and share
  - To figure out resources and initiatives to start programs at their schools
  - Discussed equity very broadly
- Committee to meet again in a couple of months, with superintendents, so they can be involved and speak
- Discussion on how to talk about equity at school meetings, how to connect it with budgeting, or building it in to council discussions
- Bloor Collegiate was supposed to move to Central Tech due to the construction; there is no change to construction schedule- still on track
- [TDSB has come out with latest number on current repair backlog](#) (3.5 million); advocating provincial government to fund
- [Labour update](#): CUPE deal has gone through
- Secondary teachers, and elementary teachers are in strike position for November 25<sup>th</sup>
- November 14 there is meeting at Western Tech (Jane and Annette) for the TDSB Secondary Program Review
- Long term project: how to configure our secondary schools going forward (110 schools and students for 80, there is a lot of extra space on how to move forward with that)
  - Population issue, nothing has been done in a long time
  - If you can, go to the [Secondary Program Review](#), engage and give your feedback on what it should look like
  - What programs can we offer kids if there is no population?
  - How do we engage our families with kids in elementary schools?
  - [Consultations](#) done before November ends
  - Will the ministry hold back funding? There is moratorium on school closures
  - They will do it based on space
  - Decline in enrollment
    - Olc? (30, 40 thousand right there)
    - Increase in private schools
    - Schools are not functioning due to decrease in enrollment, cannot offer special classes
- [Open Houses and Information Nights](#)
  - Oakwood, on November 26
- [Budget cuts in TDSB](#)
  - On the table, reduction in transportation, busses for special needs

- They want to delay that change
  - Implementation issues
  - No change in bussing for next year
- [French review](#)
  - Changes to entry points (not SK, now JK and grade 4)
  - Elimination of Extended French
  - Immersion is more readily available
  - Plans to beef up Core French
  - Impacts every student
  - Use resources better
  - Board will work harder on recruitment of French teachers

## SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- School improvement work has been ongoing, visiting schools, improving goals; why did they select this data, encouraging parents to ask principals about this data
- Well-being info is looking at student census, and EQAO (their thoughts)
- Going through the school process
  - Have 3 tangible goals
  - Make sure you are progressing, or change
- Going to schools every 3 to 4 weeks
  - Some only go 3 or 4 times a year
- Investigate where learning is not happening and intervene, look at students who aren't learning
- All aware of getting progress reports this week, ask questions, bring children along to be a voice of their own learning, they are in charge, important to report to parents
- Grade 1, what are students doing in Grade 1 reading, and in SK
  - If we are not ensuring they are reading, it will be much more difficult
  - What interventions are being put in place
  - What teachings are put into place
  - Same thing for the French program
    - They are working on basic things
    - Oral development happens
    - It is a bit delayed and ask the same questions
  - Collect info for French and English programs
  - Timelines are different; load on kids
  - What are the right questions to ask the teachers?
    - What should we be expecting from teachers?
    - On ministry website
      - Evaluation: there is policy document that all schools are responsible for
      - Resources
      - Guide for parents: what to ask and expect
    - On People for Education website
      - Resources
- Homework assignments

- Parents' observations on what some kids are getting, and some are not
- Is there a standard around homework?
- Guiding policy is Ontario Education documents
- Plays out differently in each classroom
  - Professional judgement is different for all teachers
- Emphasize knowing the learners in front of us, what they need to move forward and their identities
- Many policies including a homework policy
  - Some parents want their kids to have more, or none
- Authentic learning is important in daily lives
  - Worksheet are rarely a great tool
- Supporting people for education meeting (November 4<sup>th</sup>)

## STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Heather Johnson, TDSB Mental Health Lead and Social Worker
- [PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- Mental health and wellbeing topics are starting to become more important in schools
- New strategy done 9 years ago (also additions)
  - Really incorporate more in education, great place to implement
- Dr. Kathy Short, the Director of School Mental Health Ontario
  - How to implement mental health in everything we do at school
  - Importance of how it affects students and their daily lives
  - Do get together a couple times a year
  - Strategy is integrated with the board
  - Video highlights the stigma and what people need
  - Promoting mental health
    - Video by CAMH showing difference between mental health and mental illness
    - Raise awareness on how to look after our mental health
    - Bell Let's Talk Day
    - People say mental health when they really mean mental illness
    - What are the habits and skills we need to have?
    - You need to take care of your mental health before you take care of your child
      - It changes all the time but how to intentionally take care of ourselves
    - Work together more on equity
      - More integration
      - People who have low income have a higher effect on mental health
      - LGTBQ members have higher suicide rates (increase)
- A vision of mental health for everyone
  - The smallest children take the most time
  - Mental health challenges they have
  - Want to promote and prevent mental health stigma

- We know how to prevent flu and cold we should do the same thing on mental health
  - How to identify feelings
- Tiered system of support (school mental health -assist)
  - How students can feel included, be understood and how to welcome these students
  - We can intentionally focus on wellbeing
  - Create learning environment for students that are safe and equitable, engaging and inclusive
- Important for every student to connect with at least one caring adult at their school
  - Language of caring adult is parent's language not student's language
- School Improvement Plan (SIP)
  - All schools will develop a SIP goal for well-being, based on student census data
    - Use EQAO data, and ongoing data
    - Bigger the data is, the less it is about your students
    - Focus groups
    - Surveys
      - On how they are feeling
      - Where do we need to do work?
      - Putting more practises into place
      - Student census is now a few years old
      - Seek out more information
      - Ask specific questions
        - I feel worried (5 scale)
    - Every school is asked to have 3 SIP goals
    - How is our wellbeing attached to achievement?
    - What message are we sending as a school?
      - You have to pay attention
- Share evidence-based resources and help to support evaluative curriculum resources, programs and partnerships
- Reduce stigma through school teams and student leadership development
- Partner with students, family and the wider community
  - Need to know pathways for resources
  - Better coordinate services
- Focus on caring adults
- Harry Potter CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy)
  - Life skills
  - Through novel study
- Suicide protocol
  - Support kids with mental health challenges
  - Protocol with teachers
  - Started with secondary schools
  - Trained social workers, psychologists, admins
    - Ensure 2 people in every school know

- Janitor can find note and know what to do
  - Teachers have to be more involved if they notice kids trying to talk about it
- How will we know we are successful?
  - Progress reflected in student achievement data, school climate surveys and student focus groups
  - Gaps in well-being
- We are human developers
  - How to create warmth in the school
  - Be welcomed
- Language of protective factors
  - What can be done?
- Everything is much more successful if we engage family, parents, etc.
- Social emotional learning
  - Holds everything together
  - Knowing who you are
  - 10 lessons
    - 1. Stress management and coping skills
    - 2. Emotion identifiable skills
    - 3. Positive motivation skills
    - 4. Relationships skills
    - 5. Self-confidence and identity skills
    - 6. Critical and creative thinking skills
    - etc.
  - Starting with family/parent engagement
    - Social emotional learning skills
    - Activities for parents and children to do together
    - Resources (videos, picture books)
    - You learn by making mistakes
    - This will be released in January
- How do you know when something is wrong?
  - Trust what you hear, see and feel
  - Pay attention to changes that may seem unusual or excessive
  - Consider frequency, intensity and duration
  - Seek help when behaviour interferes significantly with day to day activities
  - Can even be simple things that can make a difference
    - Give a compliment
- How we interact impacts the culture in the school
- Support in the classroom
  - Everyday mental health classroom resources
  - Co-written with teachers
  - Tips, practises
  - Why is mental health in the classroom important?
- Student engagement
  - TDSB Students 4 Wellbeing (S4W)

- use social network platforms
- Mental health and well-being TDSB parent partnership committees
  - issue accessing parents' piece on the website
  - section on mental wellbeing
- take away
  - What are you doing at home?
  - how can you do it through PIAC
  - self-affirmations
  - tell your kids you are proud
  - Some things are easy for some kids and harder for others
- How can you get involved? Where to find support, resources
  - "What's Up" Walk-In Clinics, 6 across Toronto
  - Kids Help Phone
  - Mental Health TO
  - Toronto Public Health – find your liaison public health nurse
  - School mental health resources and tools
  - Mental health and addiction nurses – accessed through IST/SST
- What do you do for your own well-being?
- TDSB-approved workshops we can bring into the school
  - Partnership office
  - Online, under Educational Partnerships

NEXT MEETING – January 16 at Ossington/Old Orchard Junior Public School – creating positive school climates