

Trustee Stephanie Donaldson
Ward 9 Virtual Ward Forum
Thursday May 14, 2020
7:15-8:30pm
Hosted by Christy Heath on
Webex Meetings

Present for Ward 9: Trustee Stephanie Donaldson, Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos, Superintendent Mike Gallagher, Superintendent Jane Philips-Long, Superintendent Tracy Hayhurst.

Total Attendees: 38 parents and educators from Ward 9

- The meeting went online at 7:10
 - Approximately 5 minutes was spent welcoming participants and saying hello as people joined
- The meeting was called to order by Trustee Stephanie Donaldson at 7:16pm.
 - Participants were asked to mute their mics and put requests to speak and questions in the chat thread to Everyone
- **Trustee Stephanie Donaldson:** welcomed everyone and thanked them for all that they are doing, staying home, supporting their children while “living at work”.
 - **Board Update:** New - Committee of the Whole, Emergency Response and Recovery Committee holds a public web meeting every Tuesday at 4:30pm look here: <https://tdsb.on.ca/Leadership/Boardroom/Live-Webcast-of-Meetings> for more info and to connect.
 - The Board is also working with the Union Partners to look at improvements around distance learning and how to move forward and into the new school year.
- **Executive Superintendent Sandy Spyropoulos:** Thank you to the parents for all of your efforts. Gratitude and appreciation to educators for all their work and commitment Mental health and wellbeing is the top priority of the board at this point. Superintendents are meeting daily and each is meeting frequently with Principals and staff.

- **Superintendent Jane Philips-Long:** Food Cards continue to be sent out to TDSB families through the Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS). 150 high needs schools have been identified and \$50 Food Cards are rolling out to families. Devices are being distributed to families not connected. 19 000 teachers have participated in 40 online courses that ensure continuous learning.
- **Superintendent Mike Gallagher:** Thank you to the amazing educators. Collecting “good news” stories from families and educators about how students are connecting to their teachers. In a way, some students are feeling more connected. We are still working to connect with some students. We have reached the “messy middle” of our distance learning journey, this is where we put in the really hard work.
 - Reminder to School Councils that School Statement of Needs must be submitted as Principal and Vice Principal placements are happening.
 - Principals and Vice Principals are continuing to learn and looking ahead to how things will change going forward.
- **Superintendent Tracy Hayhurst:** “ It is a privilege to lead during these times”. Thank you to the families and caregivers. Thank you to the educators, principals and support staff.
- **Thought Exchange Parent Survey:** the parent survey about remote learning has closed. An Executive Summary will be released shortly.
 - **Sandy Spyropoulos:** survey indicated concern from parents regarding level of isolation that they and their students feel. The disparity between what is being offered from class to class, school to school etc... A positive is parents are asking how they can be more involved, they are showing more interest in helping with their children’s education and looking to continue engagement when back in the classroom.
- **D. Williams, PIAC CoChair:** Praise for virtual meetings. The experience of virtual parent meetings has been very positive for parents, it allows them to be connected. Online learning has been shining a light for parents on what and how students are learning.
- **Andrew Waters, WArD 9 PIAC Rep:** Online School Council meetings seem to be increasing participation. Will this venue for meetings be supported moving forward? Some by-laws would have to be changed.
 - **Stephanie Donaldson:** This can maybe be looked at through PIAC? Would like to do more Virtual Ward Meetings going forward.
 - **Andrew Waters:** This was discussed at PIAC, looking for support from Ward 9 parents.
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- **Nero Persaud, Ward 7 Steering Committee:** Online school council meetings may increase engagement. Parents do not have to worry about babysitters or meals. Maybe physical and virtual meetings can be incorporated once we are back to school?
- **Andrew Waters:** Is there Board supported tech for Parent Councils to use? Webex or Meet?
 - **Mike Gallagher:** Google Meet is the board supported meeting tool at the school level. Webex is being phased in with the Superintendents and Trustees
- **Sandy Spyropoulos:** Has anyone had a Parent Council meeting online?
 - **Lisa Watt, Principal Pauline Jr. Public School:** Our school had one on Zoom
 - **Erin Altosaar, Principal Rawlinson Community School:** Our Council did meet and greet with different grade levels
 - **Judith Kramer, Principal Jean Lumb Public School:** Held a virtual check in but not an official council meeting.
 - **Michael Morris, Principal Regal Road Jr. Public School:** Sending regular blog out to parents and including a Parent Council Blurb.
 - **Lisa Coffey, Principal Ryerson Community School & Downtown Vocal Academy (DVM):** Held a Virtual Open House for incoming families of DVM over Google Meet. Ryerson Staff put together a video to connect with students
 - **Diane Jamieson, Principal Ossington Old Orchard Jr. Public School:** Our School Council has held 2 or 3 virtual meetings and has another scheduled.
 - **Used Google Meet to hold a Virtual School Assembly just today.**
 - It was a Character Assembly. It was run 2 times, once in the morning and once in the afternoon to allow as many to join as possible (Google Meet allows 250 participants). Advertised in the Newsletter and the assembly ran about 30 minutes each. The Students were invited to share photos and videos on how they are showing the character traits. Going forward will hold the assemblies in smaller groupings (by grade).
- **D. Williams:** How are parents and students who are starting at new schools in September being welcomed?
 - **Caitland Ellis, Principal Dovercourt Public School:** Our Kindergarten students are creating postcards to send to the new JKs
 - **Susana Arnott, Principal Bloor C.I. and Alpha Alternative:** Our incoming Grade 9 Students will have a Virtual Meet and Greet with current students and parents. The grade 12s are not really engaging at the moment. One of the Bloor grade 12 students wrote the teachers an “it’s not you , its me letter” saying although the teachers assignments were appreciated, they were not going to do the work.
 - Susana quote “We don’t know what we’re ready for but we’re ready”.

- **Stephanie Donaldson:** If a school doesn't have an orientation, is there an online option on the TDSB Website?
 - **Sandy Spyropoulos:** Not at the moment. We hope that everyone will keep sharing their ideas and best practices,

- **Trustee Stephanie Donaldson:** What is the thing you need to transition back to school?
 - **Nero Persaud:** Parents feel a lack of face to face contact with teachers and classmates for their children. Has there been any discussion as to if JK will go ahead in the fall?
 - **Sara Gogani, Principal Downtown Alternative School:** We have been connecting with our students and families via phone. Parents feel they are missing feedback, not seeing the teachers before and after school, they are missing the connection. Parents want to know if the support they are giving their children is successful. The teachers have implemented phone in office hours once a week for parents to connect with them.

- **Trustee Stephaine Donaldson:** Thank you again. It is an honour to work with everyone.

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:27pm